Shoujo Scars
Suna no Shiro
Volume 3
Translator: Oceansportrait
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Chapter 18

●一条ゆかり
8月18日生まれの女流。
'78年昭和53年3月号「別冊マーガレット」の「デビュー」以降、数々のまんがやエッセイを発表し、精力的な執筆活動を展開している。
代表作「デザイナー」「砂の城」「有閑倶楽部」。

カバーデザイン／石川雅代

砂の城 3

一条ゆかり

La vie est un
éternel château de sable
sans cesse battu
par les flots.

集英社文庫

561

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ナタリーは、自作の盗難が認められたこと
をきっかけに、単身アメリカに渡った。仕事
をしていく中で、ナタリーはテレビ局の社長
ジェラルドと急速に親しくなっていく。
一方、フランスに残されたランランは、
ナタリーの再婚を聞くことで、さびしさを
まぎらわせていた。遠く離れたふたりは、

集英社文庫(コミック版)

――既刊大好評発売中――

一条ゆかり◆砂の城 全4巻
　こいきな奴ら 全2巻
　デザイナー
　ときめきのシルバー・スター
岩木たく◆机をステージに
　やさしい手を、もってる
　小さな祈り
くらもちふさこ◆東京のカサノバ 全2巻
　おしゃべり階段
　Kiss＋αr²
　わすからセンチのロック
　〈イラスト版〉くらもちふさこイラストレーションズ
岩館真理子自選集◆①遠い星をかぞえて
　②黄昏
　③えんじえる
　④五番街を歩こう
　⑤魔子物語
　〈イラスト版〉岩館真理子イラストレーションズ
陸奥A子自選集◆①雪国とばらの日々
　②粉雪ポルカ
槇村さとる◆僕のアランフェス 全4巻
　ダンシング・ゼネレーション 全2巻
作:岡本 優 画:羽根子◆おもひでぼろぼろ 全2巻
田渕由美子作品集◆①フランス窓便り
　②ござ娘しゃ
多田かおる◆愛してナイト 全4巻
倉川匡代◆ONE 愛にめりたい 全4巻
太刀掛秀子◆花ふらんこゆれて 全2巻
塩森恵子◆紫林館通り ①②
もりたしゅん名作集◆①うみどり
　②雨花の新小岩3丁目
いくえみ綾コレクション◆①エンゲージ
　②以心伝心のお月さん

THE SANDCASTLE

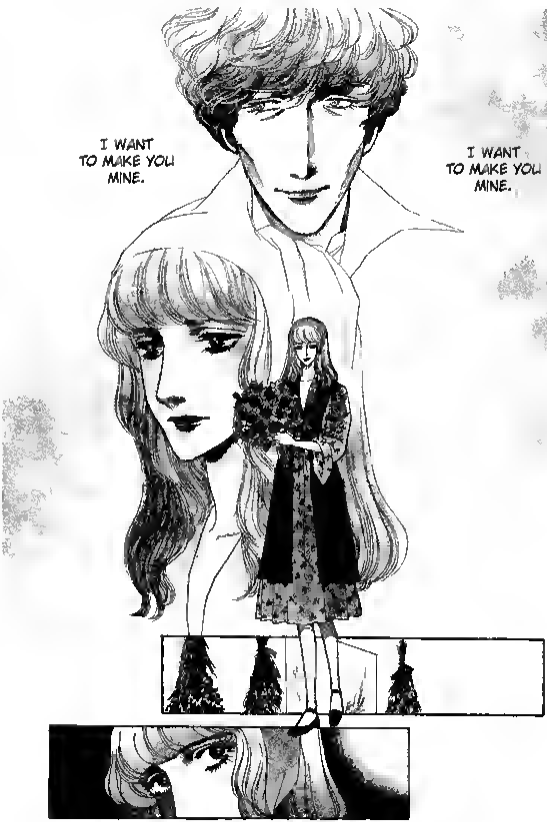
3

Ichijou Yukari

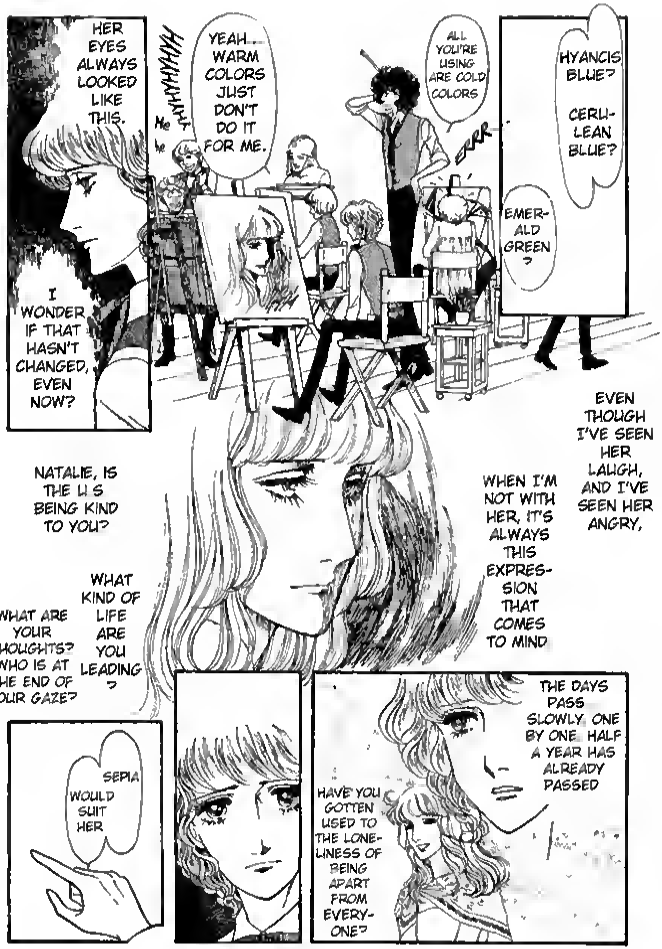
THE SANDCASTLE 3

LE CHÂTEAU DE SABLE

ICHIJOU YUKARI


I WANT TO MAKE YOU MINE.
I WANT TO MAKE YOU MINE.

MIAMI, LOS ANGELES
WASHINGTON, NEW ORLEANS
THE ROCKIES, THE BEAUTIFUL WILDERNESS
EVERY WEEKEND, HE INVITES ME OUT
A BOUQUET OF FLOWERS THAT ARE BEING SENT EVERY TWO DAYS
THE AMERICA THAT I KNOW ALWAYS HAS HIM IN THE PICTURE
I MIGHT BE ABLE TO FORGET IT ALL
PERHAPS IF I JUST CONTINUE ON LIKE THIS


HER EYES ALWAYS LOOKED LIKE THIS.
I WONDER IF THAT HASN'T CHANGED, EVEN NOW?
HAHAHAHA
YEAH... WARM COLORS JUST DON'T DO IT FOR ME.
ALL YOU'RE USING ARE COLD COLORS
HYANCIS BLUE?
CERU-LEAN BLUE?
EMER-ALD GREEN ?
EVEN THOUGH I'VE SEEN HER LAUGH, AND I'VE SEEN HER ANGRY,
WHEN I'M NOT WITH HER, IT'S ALWAYS THIS EXPRES-SION THAT COMES TO MIND
NATALIE, IS THE U S BEING KIND TO YOU?
WHAT KIND OF LIFE ARE YOU LEADING ?
WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS? WHO IS AT THE END OF YOUR GAZE?
SEPIA WOULD SUIT HER
HAVE YOU GOTTEN USED TO THE LONE-LINESS OF BEING APART FROM EVERY-ONE?
THE DAYS PASS SLOWLY. ONE BY ONE. HALF A YEAR HAS ALREADY PASSED

WOW!
WOULD IT REALLY BE OKAY FOR ME TO SUBMIT SOMETHING?!
YOU NEVER KNOW YOU JUST MIGHT GET ONE OF THE PRIZES
WHY DON'T YOU SUBMIT IT TO THE UPCOMING ART COMPETITION?
SEPIA, HUH? THAT MIGHT NOT BE SO BAD!
NOT BAD, NOT BAD AT ALL. I LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING THE FINISHED PIECE
YOU CAN'T BEAT SOMEONE WITH NATURAL BORN TALENT RENEE
I'VE BEEN DRAWING SINCE I WAS SIX AND THIS IS THE ONLY THING I HAVE TO SHOW FOR IT!
FRANCIS' GOT IT MADE!
THEY'RE ONLY NOTICING THE CHANGE BECAUSE I WAS SO TERRIBLE AT IT BEFORE
EVERYONE'S STARTING TO FEEL THE PRESSURE BECAUSE YOU'RE GETTING BETTER WITH EACH PASSING DAY
HUH, AND WHO'S THE ONE WHO WAS CRYING HIS EYES OUT WHEN HE DIDN'T MAKE IT TO THE TOP THREE IN THE LAST ART CONTEST, HUH?!
OH? AND WHO ARE YOU TO SAY? YOU'RE EVEN WORSE THAN ME!
NOW NOW BOTH OF YOU, SETTLE DOWN
TEACHER! I'M FINISHED! CAN YOU TAKE A LOOK?
THEY'RE RIGHT WHY DIDN'T I REALIZE IT EARLIER? IT'D BE PERFECT
SEPIA, HUH?

FRANCIS, YOU BETTER START THINKING ABOUT WRAPPING IT UP OR YOU'RE GOING TO END UP MISSING DINNER.
OH JUST A SEC I JUST NEED TO WASH THE BRUSHES
EVERYONE'S SO FAST! THEY DISAPPEAR AS SOON AS IT NEARS DINNER!
HEY FELHAN, YOUR MOTHER'S GOING TO BE DISCHARGED FROM THE HOSPITAL SOON. ISN'T SHE?
TOO BAD THAT THEY HAVE A POLICY HERE THAT ALL STUDENTS HAVE TO STAY IN A DORM, OR ELSE YOU COULD'VE LIVED TOGETHER!
BUT YOU MUST BE LOOKING FORWARD TO IT THOUGH, SINCE YOU'LL BE ABLE TO SEE EACH OTHER EVERY WEEKEND!
HUH, EVEN IF THEY DIDN'T HAVE THAT POLICY, I WOULDN'T HAVE LIVED WITH HER.
SINCE SHE'S GETTING MARRIED AFTER-ALL
WHAT ?!
NO WAY !!
H-HOW COULD SHE JUST MARRY SOMEONE LIKE...
B-BUT....ARE YOU REALLY OKAY WITH THAT?
WHAT ...?
JESUS CHRIST
THERE'S NO CHANCE OF WINNING WHEN THAT "OTHER MAN" IS JESUS HIMSELF

SO WHY DON'T YOU WANT TO LIVE WITH HER?
OH— THEN SHE'S CHOSEN TO BECOME A NUN?
BUT... WHY? YOU WERE FINALLY ABLE TO RECONCILE... THERE'S NOTHING HOLDING YOU BACK FROM HER...
SHE'S THE ONE WHO DROVE MY FATHER INTO A CORNER, AND IT'S A FACT THAT MY FATHER DIED AS A RESULT
IT'S BECAUSE, EVEN THOUGH SHE WASN'T CHARGED BY THE STATE OF LAW, SHE COMMITTED A SIN. THERE'S NO GETTING AROUND IT
THE ONLY THING SHE CAN DO IS TO PUNISH HERSELF...
IF SHE'S GOING TO HAVE TO SHOULDER THE BURDEN FOR THE REST OF HER LIFE, THEN IT'S BETTER FOR HER IF SHE DEDICATES HER LIFE TO CHRIST. SHE'LL BE SAVED THAT WAY...
THERE IS NO WAY I CAN STOP HER FROM WHAT SHE HERSELF HAS DECIDED TO DO
YOU WAITED FOR HER FOR SO LONG... AND NOW SHE'S GOING TO DO THIS TO YOU?!
WHAT ABOUT YOU, THEN? SHE ISN'T THINKING ABOUT YOU AT ALL!
BUT HOW COULD SHE JUST DECIDE TO DO THAT?

SLAP
IF THIS WAS GOING TO HAPPEN,
THEN MAYBE IT WOULD'VE BEEN BETTER IF SHE'D NEVER GOTTEN BETTER!
DON'T EVER SAY THAT AGAIN
I'M SORRY
FELMAN I'M SORRY
I I DIDN'T MEAN WHAT I JUST SAID

SHE'S SOMEONE WHO TRIED TO KILL HERSELF ONCE BUT NOW SHE'S DECIDED ONCE AGAIN TO LIVE

THAT'S ENOUGH FOR ME

SHE LOOKED BACK AT ME THAT'S ALL THAT MATTERS

SNOW. HUH?

LOOKS LIKE IT MIGHT BE A HEAVY ONE

IT LOOKS LIKE IT'LL BE QUITE CHILLY TONIGHT

I THOUGHT FRANCE WAS COLD BUT COMPARED TO HERE IT'S LIKE THE TROPICS

WELL THANKS TO THE WEATHER, I GOT TO BUY YOU A COAT

IT SUITS YOU

BUT... I FEEL SO BAD FOR ACCEPTING SOMETHING SO EXPENSIVE

I HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING FOR YOU TO WARRANT SUCH AN EXTRAVAGANT GIFT

WELL THEN, MIGHT I ASK THAT YOU DON'T ACCEPT OFFERS TO GO OUT WITH ANY OTHER MAN?

THEY ALL SEEM TO BE WAITING FOR JUST THE RIGHT MOMENT TO ASK YOU

HE'S BEEN FOLLOWING ME FOR FIVE BLOCKS!
I'M REALLY SORRY TO ASK THIS OF YOU, BUT COULD YOU PRETEND TO BE ACQUAINTANCES OF MINE JUST FOR A BIT?
I-I'M SORRY I WAS JUST BEING CHASED AFTER BY SOMEONE...
BLUSH
IF THAT'S ALL YOU'VE GOT, YOU'RE BETTER OFF NOT QUITTING YOUR DAY JOB.
UM
I-I'M SANDY BROWN BY THE WAY...
JEFF... HOW ABOUT WE CALL A CAB FOR HER?
WHAT AM I GOING TO DO I'M SO SCARED, I CAN'T GO HOME!
LOOK AT MY BODY! I HAVE CONFIDENCE IN MY LOOKS!
I CAN DANCE, AND I'VE BEEN STUDYING DRAMA FOR TWO WHOLE YEARS!
WAIT, MR. HOWARD! I'M DESPERATE FOR A ROLE!

MR. HOWARD!!!
OH JEFF, WEREN'T YOU A BIT COLD TO HER? WHY NOT INTRODUCE HER TO SOMEONE?
IF YOU DO A FAVOUR FOR EVERY BROAD THAT COMES YOUR WAY THERE'LL NEVER BE AN END TO IT
WHY MR. HOWARD IT'S A PLEASURE TO HAVE YOU HERE TONIGHT
THE SHOW GIRLS HAVE HEARD YOU WOULD BE ATTENDING TONIGHT AND SO HAVE PREPARED THEIR BEST SHOW YET!
LOOK, IT'S JEFF HOWARD, THE PRESIDENT OF MGC
HE'S BEEN SPENDING AN AWFUL AMOUNT OF TIME WITH THAT WOMAN NATALIE ROHME THE FRENCH CHILDREN'S AUTHOR OR SO I HEARD?
EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT HOW HE'S GOING OUT OF HIS WAY FROM HIS BUSY SCHEDULE TO SPEND TIME WITH HER
OH HOW LUCKY SHE IS! NOT ONLY IS HE RICH AND YOUNG BUT HE'S QUITE HANDSOME AS WELL!

HE MUST BE A MAN OF VERY HIGH STATUS--- MUCH MORE SO THAN I REALIZED
IT'S NOTHING NEW, BUT ANY TIME I GO OUT SOMEWHERE WITH JEFF, THE ATMOSPHERE CHANGES
EVERYONE IS AT HIS BECK AND CALL
AND HE BECOMES THE CENTER OF ATTENTION
GOOD EVENING MR BENSON
YOU LOOKED STUNNING AT LAST WEEK'S PARTY, MISS NATALIE,
YOU PUT THE HOSTESS TO SHAME!
AS A SPONSOR, I COULDN'T HAVE ASKED FOR MORE!
HAHA...
THANKS TO YOU, MY PRODUCTS HAVE BEEN SELLING MIGHTY WELL!
WHY HELLO THERE JEFF "JUST NEWS" HAS GOTTEN TOP RATINGS YET AGAIN!
HEY THERE NOW! WE'RE WELL ACQUAINTED AREN'T WE? DON'T BE SO UPTIGHT!
IF YOU'D LIKE TO TALK BUSINESS I SUGGEST WE DO SO BACK AT THE HEAD OFFICE
WHEN IT COMES TO YOUR COMPANY'S STOCKS THEY'RE QUITE THE SMART INVESTMENT SEEING AS HOW THEY'VE HARDLY EVER DROPPED.
OF COURSE, I'LL BE PAYING IN CASH
ALL I NEED IS $50,000 WORTH
ANY THING YOU COULD DO TO CHANGE THAT?
BY THE WAY JEFF, YOUR COMPANY'S STOCKS HAVE BEEN SO POPULAR THAT I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO GET MY HANDS ON THEM

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE, ANYWAY!
HUH YOU'VE GOT SOME NERVE TALKING TO ME LIKE THAT, JEFF!
THE WINE'LL ONLY GO TO WASTE
W-What did you just—
MR BENSON, I DIDN'T COME TO DINE AT THIS RESTAURANT JUST SO I COULD TALK TO YOU OVER SUCH FRIVOLOUS MATTERS
JEFF
DO YOU KNOW WHAT CAN HAPPEN IF YOU GET ON MY BAD SIDE?!
I SUGGEST THAT YOU DON'T FORGET THAT BENSON ELECTRONICS HAS BEEN THE COMPANY THAT HAS CONTRIBUTED THE MOST MONEY TO HBC!
WHO DO YOU THINK WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR BRINGING A MEAGER TELEVISION COMPANY LIKE YOURS UP TO WHERE IT IS NOW?!
CHUCKLES
HAH...
I WOULDN'T MIND DISCUSSING MY SPONSORSHIP, YOU KNOW.

SNAP
YOU IMPUDENT LITTLE ...
I'M NOT GOING TO STAND FOR YOU SEING IN MY PRESENCE! NOW GET OUT OF MY SIGHT!
Y... yes...
THERE ARE A COUNTLESS NUMBER OF COMPANIES INTERESTED IN BEING THE SPONSOR FOR "JUST NEWS"
AND MA' I MENTION, THEIR CONDITIONS ARE MUCH MORE FAVORABLE THAN YOURS
YES, SINCE IT DOES SEEM LIKE THEY'RE BOTH NOT GOING TO BACK DOWN.
HOW INTERESTING I WONDER WHO HE'LL CHOOSE?
I CAN'T ENJOY A GOOD MEAL IF HE STAYS!
GET THAT MAN OUT OF HERE!
Mr. Benson, please ...
WHO'LL IT BE? THE ESTABLISHED BENSON OR THE YOUNG HOPEFUL HOWARD?
THIS'LL BE THE TOP HEADLINES IN TOMORROW'S SOCIETY COLUMN!
HOW FRIGHTENING!
WHOEVER GETS KICKED OUT WON'T BE ABLE TO SHOW HIS FACE AT ANY PARTY OUT OF SHAME!
THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE LINKED TO THE MEDIA HERE

DON'T TELL ME YOU DIDN'T HEAR ME, JEFF HOWARD!
LEAVE! NOW!
IF YOU'RE THE ONE WHO DOESN'T WANT TO SEE MY FACE
THEN I SUGGEST YOU BE THE ONE TO LEAVE.
MURMUR
MURMUR
MURMUR
MAY I COMMENT THAT PERHAPS YOU ARE BEING A BIT PUERILE?
IT SEEMS YOU'VE HAD QUITE A BIT TO DRINK. SO I WILL TAKE IT UPON MYSELF TO CALL FOR YOUR RIDE, IF I MAY.
W-What did you just say...
Y-You want ME to leave...?
PLEASE READY THE CAR FOR THIS GENTLEMAN.

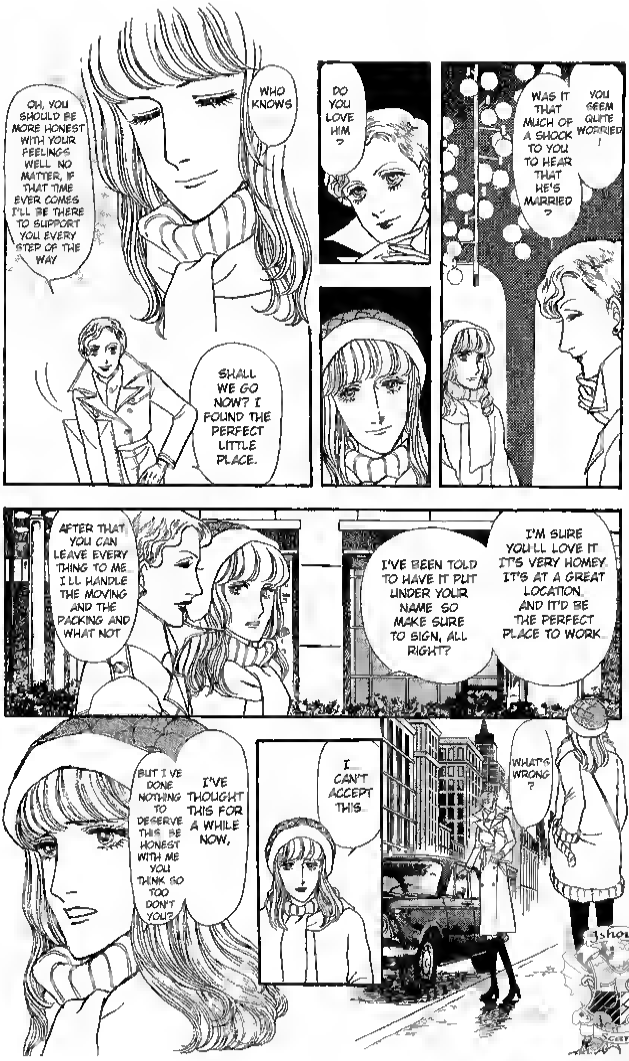
FLASH!!
FLASH!!
SIGH OF RELIEF
H-HOW RIDICULOUS! I'LL NEVER STEP FOOT IN THIS RESTAURANT EVER AGAIN!
A RESTAURANT THAT HOUSES ONLY SECOND-RATE CUSTOMERS WILL ONLY EVER BE THIRD-RATE ITSELF!
SORRY TO CAUSE SUCH A FUSS
NOT AT ALL
THE SHOW WILL BE STARTING SOON. WE HOPE YOU ENJOY YOUR MEAL
THANK YOU VERY MUCH
I'LL REMEMBER TO BOOK THIS PLACE THE NEXT TIME I HOLD A PARTY
LOOKS LIKE THE WINNER'S BEEN DECIDED

HE WAS IN THE WRONG AS WELL BUT YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO REACT THE WAY YOU DID
BUT YOU'RE SO COLD TO EVERY-ONE ELSE.
JEFF... YOU'RE ALWAYS SO KIND TO ME,
SEE THAT...
SORRY YOU HAD TO
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME ANYONE'S EVER SAID ANYTHING LIKE THAT TO ME.
I'M SURPRISED
SO IF YOU DON'T WATCH YOUR ACTIONS, YOU'LL ONLY END UP HURTING THOSE AROUND YOU
YOU HAVE POWER AND INFLUENCE ON YOUR SIDE,
IT'S NOT ONLY HIS CAREER THAT I CAN PUT AN END TO YOU KNOW
IS THAT WISE OF YOU THOUGH TO TELL ME SUCH A THING?

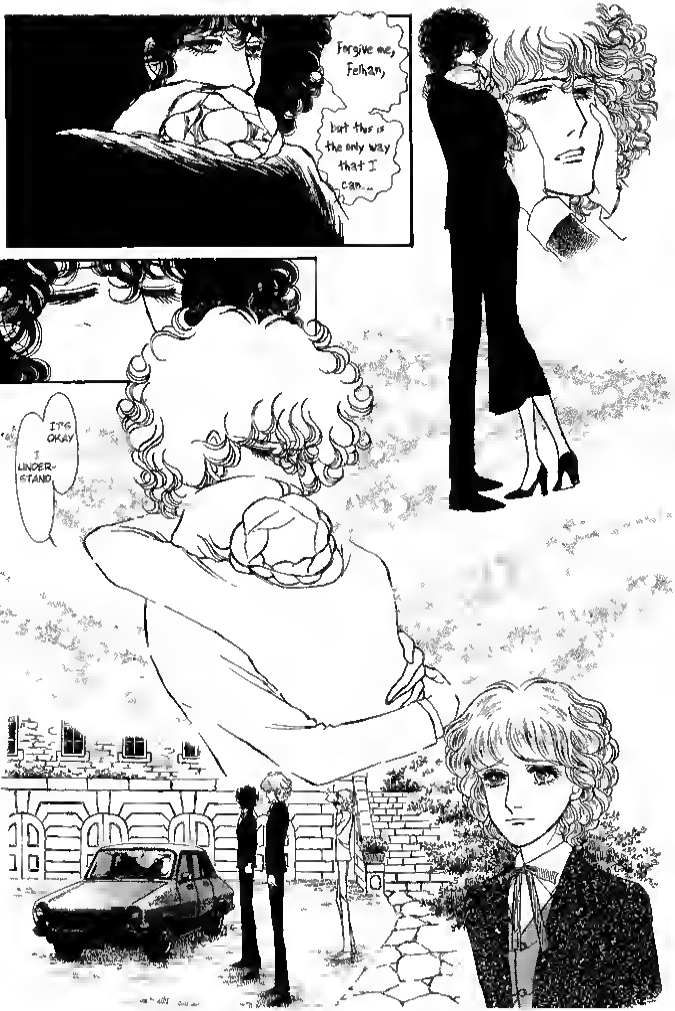
I GUESS THE ODDS ARE STACKED UP AGAINST ME THEN
I HAVE NOTHING THAT I'M AFRAID TO LOSE ANYMORE
YOUR BILLS HAVE BEEN STACKING A MILE HIGH ON MY DESK
I KNOW YOU'RE BUSY WITH YOUR COMPANY SO I'M SURPRISED YOU HAVE THE TIME TO BE OUT DINING WITH ANOTHER WOMAN LIKE THIS
I SEE YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED YOUR WAYS OF STRUTTING ABOUT THIS PLACE AS IF YOU OWNED IT
I BOUGHT A CAR I'LL SEND YOU THE BILL
IT IS A HOBBY OF MINE, AFTER-ALL
TO SPEND MONEY

MY WIFE
WHO WAS THAT ?
PARDON ?
THEY'VE LIVED SEPARATELY SINCE THREE YEARS AGO
FOR HAVING TAKEN UP HIS TIME LIKE THIS WHAT WITH HIM HAVING SHOWN ME AROUND ON THE WEEKENDS
OH I FEEL AWFUL
YES THAT'S RIGHT
HIS WIFE JERJRDIE HOWARD
NEARLY A THIRD OF THE COMPANY'S STOCKS HAVE BEEN CHANGED TO HIS WIFE'S NAME SINCE THEIR MARRIAGE
HIS WIFE IS THE SOLE DAUGHTER OF THE BIGGEST STOCKHOLDER OF HBC

MARRIED FOR MONEY
WORD OUT THERE IS THAT HE MARRIED FOR MONEY.
PART OF THE REASON WHY HE'S BEEN ABLE TO TURN HBC INTO SUCH THE FORCE THAT IT IS IS BECAUSE OF HIS WIFE'S BACKINGS
BUT DOESN'T HE CARE FOR HER?
WHO KNOWS?
CERTAINLY NOT ME.
PERHAPS? I'M NOT SURE
I HAVE NO IDEA.
WHAT ABOUT HIS WIFE?
NOT WHEN IT COUNTS AT ANY RATE.
HE'S NOT ONE TO TALK ABOUT HIS FEELINGS TO OTHERS
I'VE WORKED AT HBC FOR NEARLY EIGHT YEARS NOW BUT I'VE HARDLY EVER ASKED HIM ABOUT HIS PRIVATE LIFE

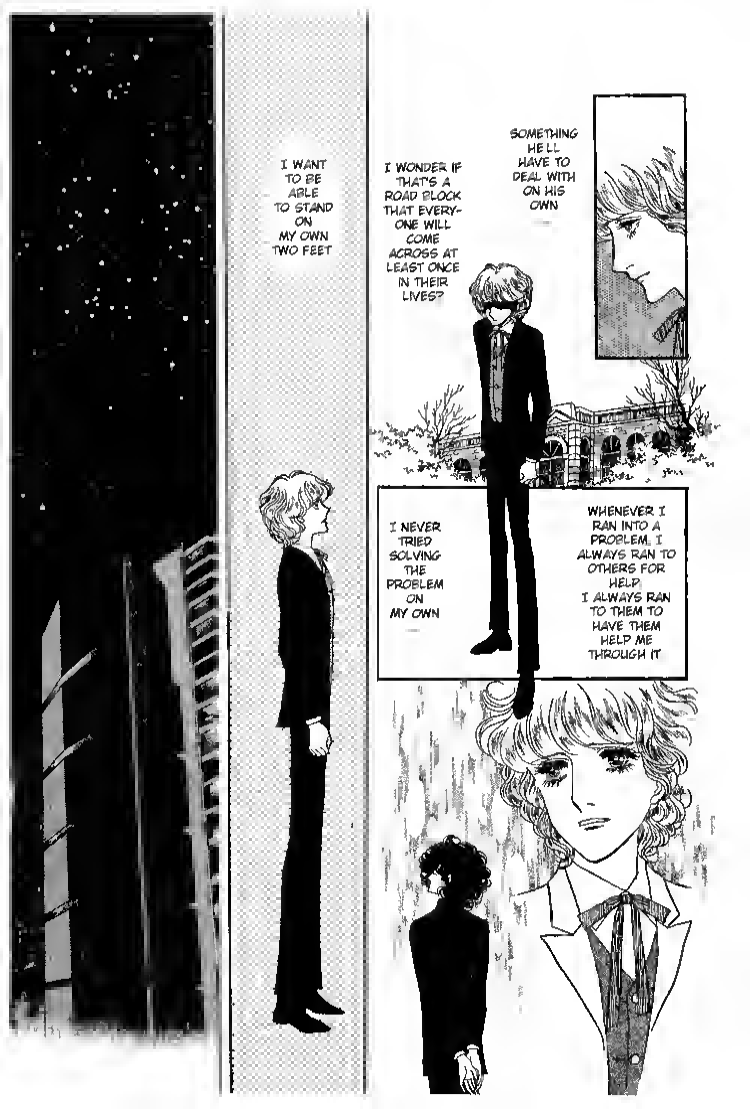

OH, YOU SHOULD BE MORE HONEST WITH YOUR FEELINGS. WELL, NO MATTER. IF THAT TIME EVER COMES, I'LL BE THERE TO SUPPORT YOU EVERY STEP OF THE WAY.
WHO KNOWS.
SHALL WE GO NOW? I FOUND THE PERFECT LITTLE PLACE.
DO YOU LOVE HIM?
YOU SEEM QUITE WORRIED.
WAS IT THAT MUCH OF A SHOCK TO YOU TO HEAR THAT HE'S MARRIED?
AFTER THAT, YOU CAN LEAVE EVERYTHING TO ME. I'LL HANDLE THE MOVING AND THE PACKING AND WHAT NOT.
I'VE BEEN TOLD TO HAVE IT PUT UNDER YOUR NAME. SO MAKE SURE TO SIGN, ALL RIGHT?
I'M SURE YOU'LL LOVE IT. IT'S VERY HOMEY. IT'S AT A GREAT LOCATION. AND IT'D BE THE PERFECT PLACE TO WORK.
I... CAN'T ACCEPT THIS.
WHAT'S WRONG?
I'VE THOUGHT THIS FOR A WHILE NOW,
BUT I'VE DONE NOTHING TO DESERVE THIS. BE HONEST WITH ME. YOU THINK SO TOO, DON'T YOU?

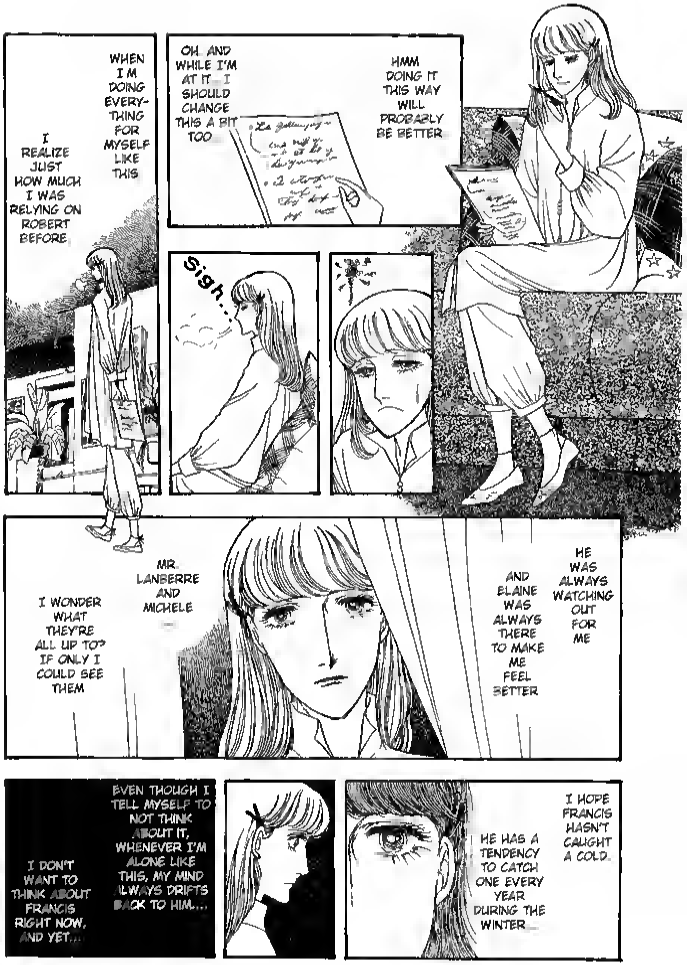
WELL THEN, PERHAPS IT'S TIME FOR US TO BE GOING
THANK YOU FOR EVERY-THING, DOCTOR
I WISH YOU THE REST OF LUCK


Forgive me, Fethan,
but this is the only way that I can...
IT'S OKAY I UNDER-STAND

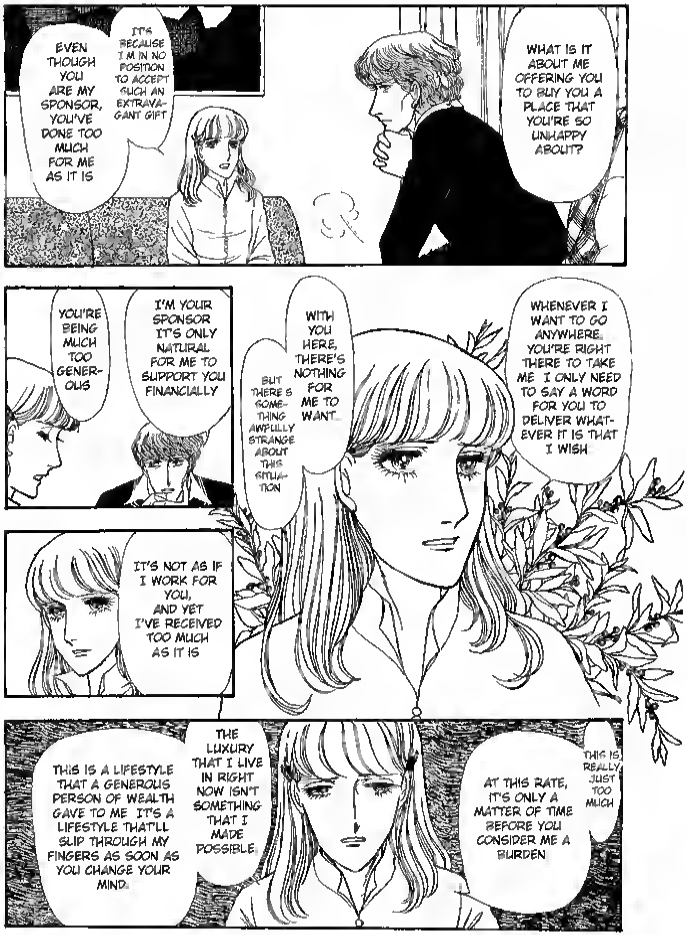
Fethan ..
stay healthy ..
and be well
FETHAN!
FETHAN!
BE WELL !
MOTH
URDDDD

GOODBYE
GOODBYE MOTHER
WHAT IS IT, FRANCIS?
At times like this... I really don't know what words of comfort I can say to him
THERE'S NO NEED.
HE'LL HAVE TO DEAL WITH THIS ON HIS OWN, THAT'S ALL
HE'S WELL AWARE OF THAT
WORDS OF COMFORT WILL BE OF NO USE TO HIM.

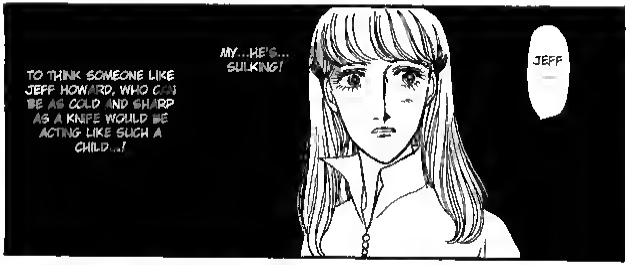

I WANT TO BE ABLE TO STAND ON MY OWN TWO FEET
I WONDER IF THAT'S A ROAD BLOCK THAT EVERY-ONE WILL COME ACROSS AT LEAST ONCE IN THEIR LIVES?
SOMETHING HE'LL HAVE TO DEAL WITH ON HIS OWN
I NEVER TRIED SOLVING THE PROBLEM ON MY OWN
WHENEVER I RAN INTO A PROBLEM, I ALWAYS RAN TO OTHERS FOR HELP. I ALWAYS RAN TO THEM TO HAVE THEM HELP ME THROUGH IT

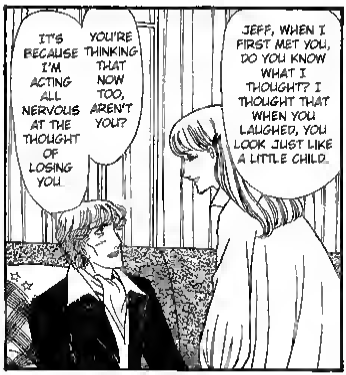

I REALIZE JUST HOW MUCH I WAS RELYING ON ROBERT BEFORE
WHEN I'M DOING EVERYTHING FOR MYSELF LIKE THIS
OH, AND WHILE I'M AT IT... I SHOULD CHANGE THIS A BIT TOO
HMM DOING IT THIS WAY WILL PROBABLY BE BETTER
Sigh...
I WONDER WHAT THEY'RE ALL UP TO? IF ONLY I COULD SEE THEM
MR. LANBERRE AND MICHELE
AND ELAINE WAS ALWAYS THERE TO MAKE ME FEEL BETTER
HE WAS ALWAYS WATCHING OUT FOR ME
I DON'T WANT TO THINK ABOUT FRANCIS RIGHT NOW, AND YET...
EVEN THOUGH I TELL MYSELF TO NOT THINK ABOUT IT, WHENEVER I'M ALONE LIKE THIS, MY MIND ALWAYS DRIFTS BACK TO HIM...
HE HAS A TENDENCY TO CATCH ONE EVERY YEAR DURING THE WINTER...
I HOPE FRANCIS HASN'T CAUGHT A COLD...

DING DONG
IF I CAN, I WANT TO KEEP MY FOCUS ON WHAT'S AHEAD, NOT ON THE PAST.
I'LL LIVE MY LIFE HERE, AND I'LL TRY TO SEE HOW FAR I CAN TAKE MYSELF.
I WON'T BUDGE FROM THIS PLACE UNTIL I HAVE FAITH IN MYSELF TO BE ABLE TO SEE HIM OFF
What are you doing here at this hour, Jeff!
I DIDN'T THINK THIS WAS SOMETHING THAT COULD BE SETTLED OVER THE PHONE. SO I CAME TO SEE YOU.
YES
ARE YOU UPSET WITH ME THAT I'VE REFUSED YOUR HELP?


WHAT IS IT ABOUT ME OFFERING YOU TO BUY YOU A PLACE THAT YOU'RE SO UNHAPPY ABOUT?
IT'S BECAUSE I'M IN NO POSITION TO ACCEPT SUCH AN EXTRAVAGANT GIFT
EVEN THOUGH YOU ARE MY SPONSOR, YOU'VE DONE TOO MUCH FOR ME AS IT IS
WHENEVER I WANT TO GO ANYWHERE, YOU'RE RIGHT THERE TO TAKE ME I ONLY NEED TO SAY A WORD FOR YOU TO DELIVER WHATEVER IT IS THAT I WISH
WITH YOU HERE, THERE'S NOTHING FOR ME TO WANT.
BUT THERE'S SOMETHING AWFULLY STRANGE ABOUT THIS SITUATION
I'M YOUR SPONSOR IT'S ONLY NATURAL FOR ME TO SUPPORT YOU FINANCIALLY
YOU'RE BEING MUCH TOO GENEROUS
IT'S NOT AS IF I WORK FOR YOU, AND YET I'VE RECEIVED TOO MUCH AS IT IS
THIS IS A LIFESTYLE THAT A GENEROUS PERSON OF WEALTH GAVE TO ME IT'S A LIFESTYLE THAT'LL SLIP THROUGH MY FINGERS AS SOON AS YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND.
THE LUXURY THAT I LIVE IN RIGHT NOW ISN'T SOMETHING THAT I MADE POSSIBLE.
AT THIS RATE, IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE YOU CONSIDER ME A BURDEN.
THIS IS REALLY JUST TOO MUCH

YES I'M SURE SHE MUST BE UPSET WITH THIS SITUATION
IS THAT WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT?
THESE ARE ALL THE THINGS YOU SHOULD BE DOING FOR YOUR WIFE NOT ME
IF YOU SUDDENLY UP AND DISAPPEAR, MY FUN WILL DISAPPEAR ALONG WITH YOU.
THERE'S NO NEED FOR YOU TO FEEL THAT WAY I ENJOY DOING WHAT I CAN FOR YOU.
SHE'S NOT LIKE YOU.
SHE LOVES TO LIVE IN LUXURY ABOVE ALL
SHE'S A WOMAN WHO NEEDS ONLY MONEY TO LIVE
NOW I'M UPSET
YOU'LL ONLY BE TAKING MY FUN AWAY BY DOING THIS,
SHE'S ONLY MY WIFE IN NAME

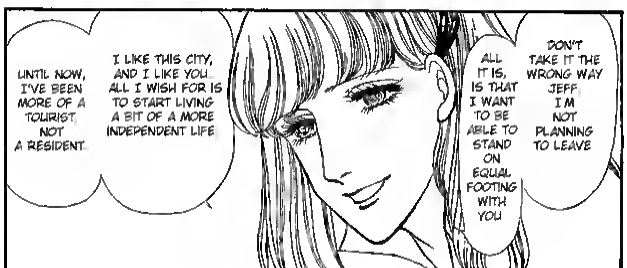

TO THINK SOMEONE LIKE JEFF HOWARD, WHO CAN BE AS COLD AND SHARP AS A KNIFE WOULD BE ACTING LIKE SUCH A CHILD...!
MY...HE'S... SULKING!
JEFF


IT'S BECAUSE I'M ACTING ALL NERVOUS AT THE THOUGHT OF LOSING YOU.
YOU'RE THINKING THAT NOW TOO, AREN'T YOU?
JEFF, WHEN I FIRST MET YOU, DO YOU KNOW WHAT I THOUGHT? I THOUGHT THAT WHEN YOU LAUGHED, YOU LOOK JUST LIKE A LITTLE CHILD.

YOU'RE LAUGHING AT ME.

WELL IT'S BECAUSE

I'M SURE EVERYONE WOULD BE SURPRISED IF THEY SAW HIM LIKE THIS


UNTIL NOW, I'VE BEEN MORE OF A TOURIST, NOT A RESIDENT.
I LIKE THIS CITY, AND I LIKE YOU. ALL I WISH FOR IS TO START LIVING A BIT OF A MORE INDEPENDENT LIFE
ALL IT IS, IS THAT I WANT TO BE ABLE TO STAND ON EQUAL FOOTING WITH YOU
DON'T TAKE IT THE WRONG WAY JEFF. I'M NOT PLANNING TO LEAVE

DO WOMEN IN THE U.S. ATTEND PARTIES WITHOUT AN ESCORT?
NO, THEY DON'T
JEFF, YOU'RE MY ONE AND ONLY MALE FRIEND IN THE U.S.
IF YOU DON'T ESCORT ME, I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO ATTEND ANY PARTY
NATALIE
WOULD YOU LIKE TO MOVE IN WITH ME?
What is it?

JSHOUJO SCANS

We are currently searching high & low for new staff!

If you know anyone who is interested in:
-editing (we need this the most!)
-typesetting
-cleaning
-J->E / C->E Translating
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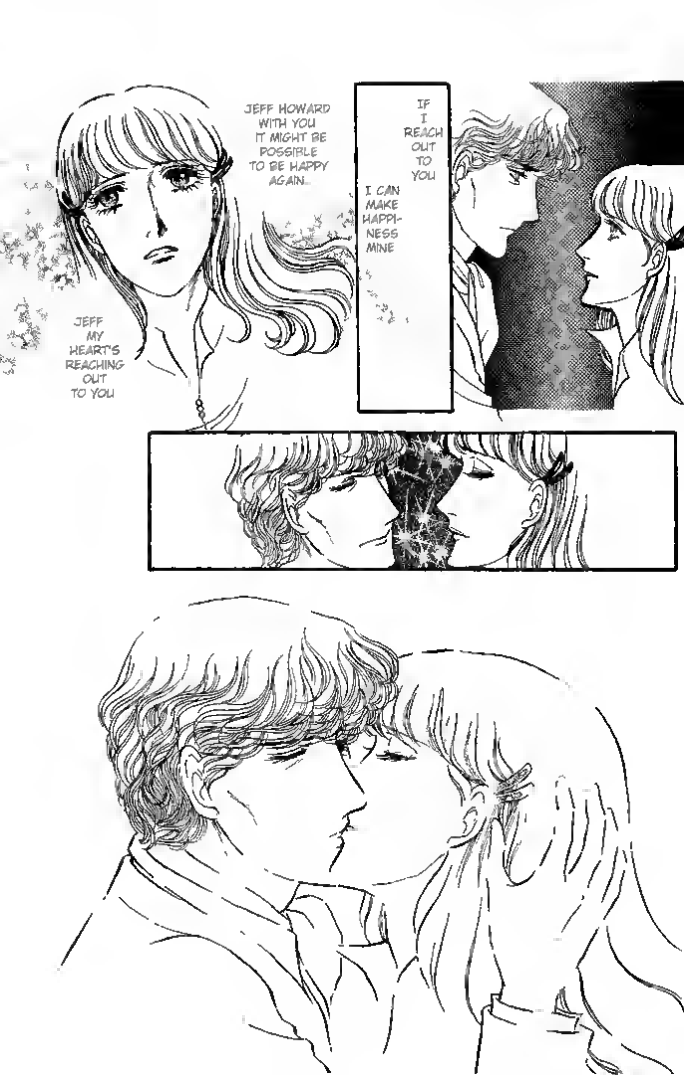
Please contact our admin Vally at:
valychan86@hotmail.com

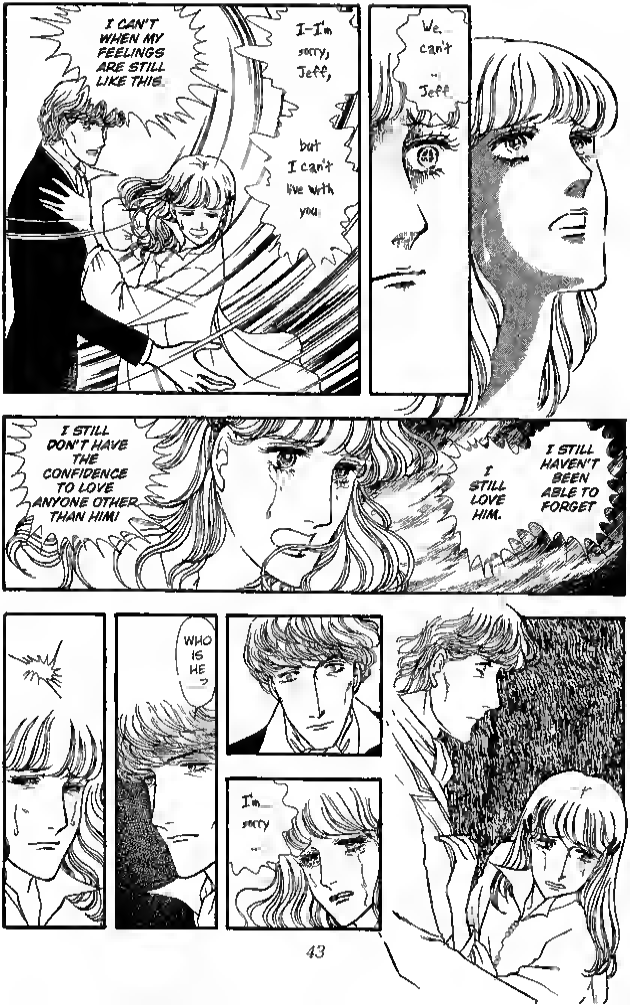
THANKS FOR READING!
-JSHOUJO Staff

Volume 3 Chapter 19

I'D LIKE YOU TO STAY BY MY SIDE
HE'S SUCH A KIND MAN.
HE CAN BE A BIT PUSHY, BUT HE'S A CHARMING MAN WHO'S MADE ME FEEL AT HOME IN THIS CITY.
HE'S A LONELY AMERICAN WHO'S TRYING DESPERATELY TO FIND A PLACE OF REFUGE FROM HIS TENSIONS.
IF I JUST GIVE MYSELF INTO YOU,
WOULD I BE ABLE TO MOVE ON FROM THESE FEELINGS THAT I'VE BEEN DRAGGING FOR SO LONG?
WOULD WE BE ABLE TO BE HAPPY TOGETHER?

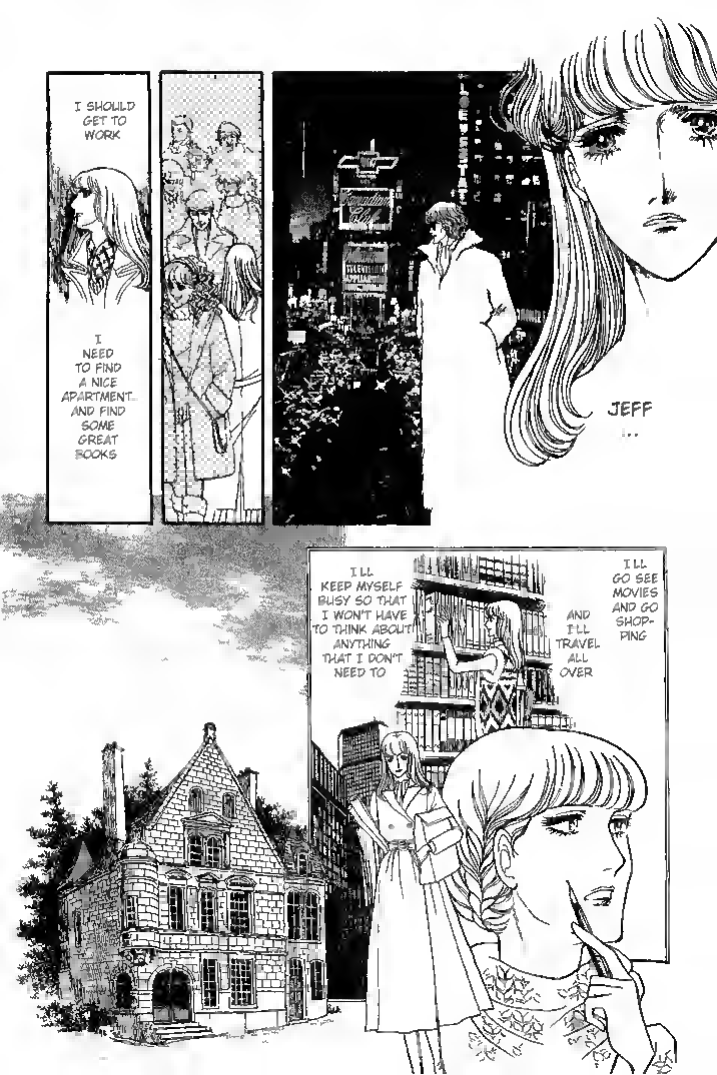

JEFF HOWARD WITH YOU IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO BE HAPPY AGAIN...
JEFF MY HEART'S REACHING OUT TO YOU
IF I REACH OUT TO YOU
I CAN MAKE HAPPI-NESS MINE

THIS IS MY PLACE TO BELONG
THIS IS WHERE MY HOME WILL BE—
WHAT A STRONG EMBRACE
THIS WILL BE MY
"LET'S GET MARRIED, NATALIE."


I CAN'T WHEN MY FEELINGS ARE STILL LIKE THIS
I-I'm sorry, Jeff,
but I can't live with you
We... can't... Jeff
I STILL DON'T HAVE THE CONFIDENCE TO LOVE ANYONE OTHER THAN HIM!
I STILL LOVE HIM.
I STILL HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO FORGET
WHO IS HE...?
I'm sorry...

I THINK I HAVE THE RIGHT TO ASK.
IF YOU HADN'T HESITATED, IT COULD'VE BEEN A CHANCE FOR YOU TO START OVER.
YOU LET SUCH AN OPPORTUNITY GO TO WASTE.
TO START OVER, HUH?

WELL AT ANY RATE, ALL IT MEANS IS I STILL HAVE SOME HOPE.
ONLY A BIT MORE, AND YOU WOULD'VE BEEN MINE.
I PRAY FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART THAT THE NEXT TIME SUCH AN OPPORTUNITY ARISES THAT YOU WON'T HESITATE
Jeff
IF YOU'RE WILLING TO START OVER, I'LL BE HAPPY TO LEND A HAND.
WHEN THAT TIME COMES THOUGH, MY HELP WILL BE NOT AS A SPONSOR, BUT AS A MAN
THAT'LL BE ALL RIGHT, WON'T IT?
I THOUGHT THAT ALL WOMEN LOVED POWER AND MONEY.
I'M HAPPY TO SEE THAT I'VE BEEN PROVEN WRONG
YES.

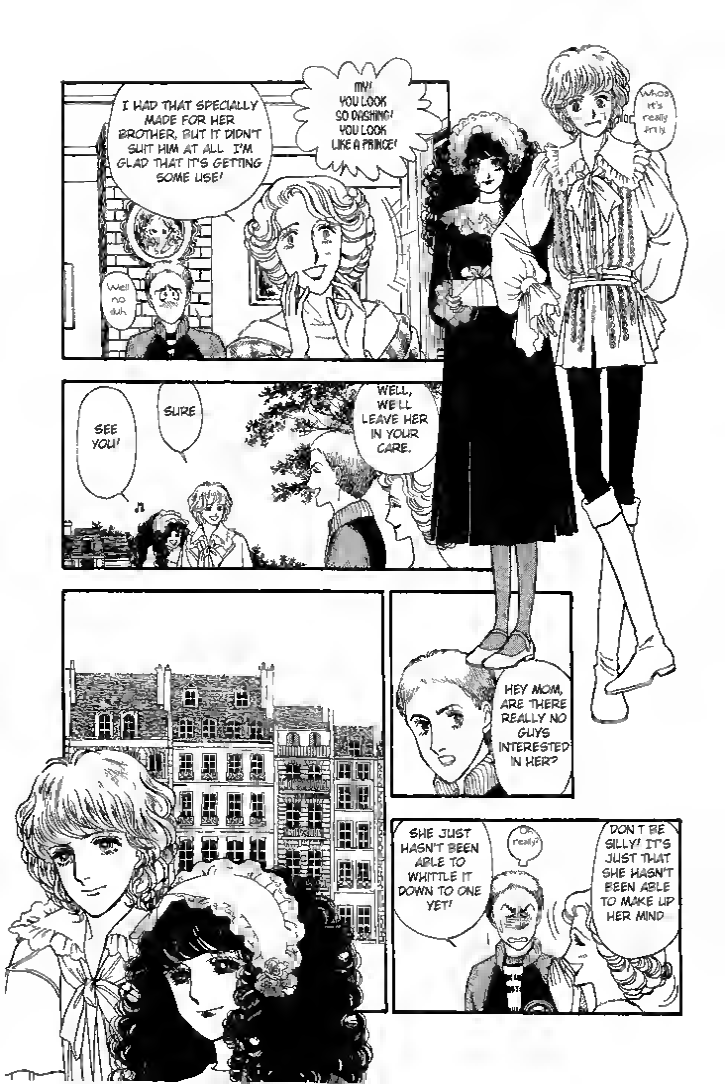

I SHOULD GET TO WORK
I NEED TO FIND A NICE APARTMENT... AND FIND SOME GREAT BOOKS
JEFF...
I'LL KEEP MYSELF BUSY SO THAT I WON'T HAVE TO THINK ABOUT ANYTHING THAT I DON'T NEED TO
AND I'LL TRAVEL ALL OVER
I'LL GO SEE MOVIES AND GO SHOPPING

LET ME SEE. YOU HAVE TO DO UP 'TIL PAGE 5 TODAY, RIGHT?
Ughh, I give up, Francis! My head's starting to hurt!
I CAN ONLY GO PART WAY BEFORE I START GETTING CONFUSED!
YOU'LL GET INTO TROUBLE IF YOU DON'T FINISH THIS UP, RIGHT?.
LET'S TALK ABOUT THAT LATER, AVILIFY.
HEY FRANCIS, WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE COLOR?
I JUST STARTED LEARNING HOW TO KNIT!
OH THIS, THIS PART CAN BE A BIT TRICKY.
BUT SEE, IF YOU USE THIS FORMULA...
COME ON NOW.
TODAY, I TRIED MAKING SAVARIN!
IT TURNED OUT WONDERFULLY IF I DO SAY SO MYSELF
WOULD YOU LIKE TO TAKE A BREAK FOR SOME TEA, FRANCIS?
I CAN'T MR. LANBERRE WILL BE WORRIED ABOUT ME
OH, WELL IF I DON'T FINISH IT UP YOU CAN JUST SLEEP OVER HERE TONIGHT!
IT'S WINTER BREAK! WHY DON'T YOU?

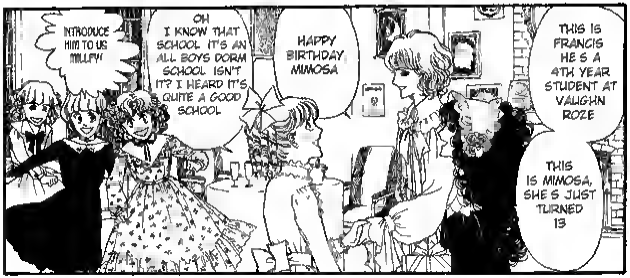
AND HE TEACHES IN A MUCH MORE CLEAR MANNER!
AND ANYWAY! FRANCIS TEACHES ME WITHOUT EVER COMPLAINING!
Is that right?
IT'S JUST THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO BUY
WELL, WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT? I'M THE ONE WHO ASKED HIM!
I'VE BEEN WONDERING— WHY DID YOU SUDDENLY START SAYING YOU WANTED TO WORK PART-TIME DURING THE BREAK ANYWAY?
YES, AND THANKS TO HIM, MILLY IS MAKING GREAT PROGRESS IN HER STUDIES!
SINCE HER BIRTH-DAY'S COMING UP SOON
I'M GOING TO MAKE THAT MY BIRTHDAY PRESENT TO NATALIE
I WANT TO BUY THESE SMALL EARRINGS I SAW THE OTHER DAY
BUT IT'S SOME-THING I WANT TO BUY WITH MY OWN MONEY
SHE SET UP A BANK ACCOUNT FOR ME
DON'T YOU GET AN ALLOW-ANCE?
IN A FEW YEARS, THERE'LL BE SO MUCH MORE THAT I'LL BE ABLE TO DO FOR YOU, NATALIE.
BUT I'M SURE SHE'LL BE HAPPY WITH THE GIFT.
I CAN ONLY DO THIS FOR HER NOW,

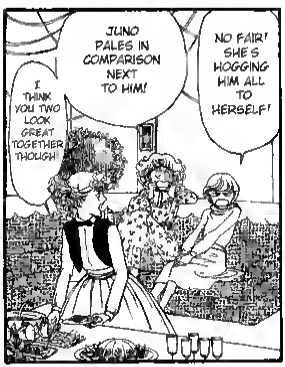
THAT'S RIGHT, I'LL MAKE SURE THAT SHE'LL BE MORE HAPPY THAN ANYONE ELSE ON THIS EARTH
AND I'LL NEVER LET HER FEEL A TRACE OF SADNESS EVER AGAIN
THAT'S WHEN I'LL BECOME NATALIE'S KNIGHT IN SHINING ARMOR
NOT AT ALL
HEY, DON'T BE MEAN!
YOU'RE GOING TO BE IN FOR ONE HECK OF A RIDE FRANCIS. SHE'S A HANDFUL
MILLFY, HOW ABOUT YOU HAVE FRANCIS HELP YOU WITH YOUR STUDIES FROM TIME TO TIME EVEN AFTER WINTER BREAK ENDS?
YOU'RE RIGHT! THEN MY GRADES'LL SURELY GO UP!
IT MAKES ME FEEL THAT MUCH MORE GROWN UP TO HAVE SUCH RESPONSIBILITIES
IT'S LIKE I SUDDENLY HAVE A SISTER, IT'S GREAT

PLEASE FRANCIS ?
WE HAVE TO ATTEND WITH OUR BOY-FRIENDS
YOUR FRIEND'S BIRTH-DAY PARTY?
THE BOYS IN MY CLASS ARE SUCH A BORE THEY'RE SO CHILDISH!
IF ONLY FRANCIS COULD BE MY SCHOOL TUTOR FOREVER AND EVER
Please go with me?
Caroline and Juju already have boyfriends to take with them to the party.
It's only me who doesn't.
THANK YOU FRANCIS!
DO YOU THINK IT'S ALL RIGHT FOR ME TO ATTEND DRESSED LIKE THIS?
YOU'RE SO WONDER-FUL!


I HAD THAT SPECIALLY MADE FOR HER BROTHER, BUT IT DIDN'T SUIT HIM AT ALL. I'M GLAD THAT IT'S GETTING SOME USE!
MY! YOU LOOK SO DASHING! YOU LOOK LIKE A PRINCE!
Well, no duh.
Whoa! It's really pretty.
SEE YOU!
SURE.
WELL, WE'LL LEAVE HER IN YOUR CARE.
HEY MOM, ARE THERE REALLY NO GUYS INTERESTED IN HER?
SHE JUST HASN'T BEEN ABLE TO WHITTLE IT DOWN TO ONE YET!
Oh really?
DON'T BE SILLY! IT'S JUST THAT SHE HASN'T BEEN ABLE TO MAKE UP HER MIND.

You too?
Argh! No fair, she turned me down when I asked her!
WOW...NO KIDDING!
MILLFINE'S BROUGHT SUCH A DREAM WITH HER!


INTRODUCE HIM TO US MILLFW!
OH I KNOW THAT SCHOOL IT'S AN ALL BOYS DORM SCHOOL ISN'T IT? I HEARD IT'S QUITE A GOOD SCHOOL
HAPPY BIRTHDAY MIMOSA
THIS IS FRANCIS HE'S A 4TH YEAR STUDENT AT VAUGHN ROZE
THIS IS MIMOSA, SHE'S JUST TURNED 13


JUNO PALES IN COMPARISON NEXT TO HIM!
NO FAIR! SHE'S HOGGING HIM ALL TO HERSELF!
I THINK YOU TWO LOOK GREAT TOGETHER THOUGH!

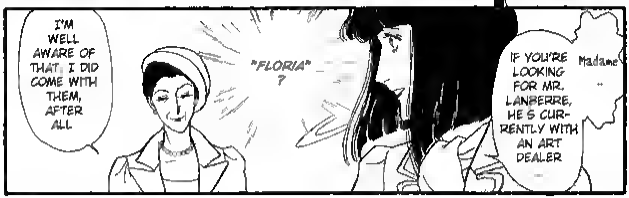
DITTO!
OH, DANCE WITH ME NEXT!
LET'S DANCE FRANCIS!

NO HE CAN'T FRANCIS WON'T BE DANCING WITH ANYONE EXCEPT ME

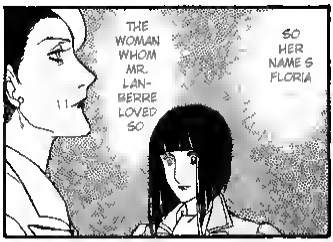
IT REALLY IS TRUE THAT HE'S A WONDERFUL PERSON THOUGH
I'VE THOUGHT THAT FROM THE FIRST TIME I LAID EYES ON YOU, FRANCIS
THIS FEELS SO GREAT! EVERYONE'S LOOKING AT ME AND FRANCIS...
EVERYONE'S JEALOUS OF ME!
SHE'S PRACTICALLY A GIRL MADE OUT OF SWEETS
SHE ALWAYS GAZES AT ME AS IF SHE'S TRYING TO READ INTO MY THOUGHTS
YOU'RE VERY WELCOME
THANK YOU, FRANCIS
I WONDER IF THIS WAS WHAT NATALIE WAS LIKE WHEN SHE WAS YOUNGER?
SHE'S A PRIVILEGED DAUGHTER WHO'S BEEN BROUGHT UP WITH ALL THE LOVE AND CARE IN THE WORLD

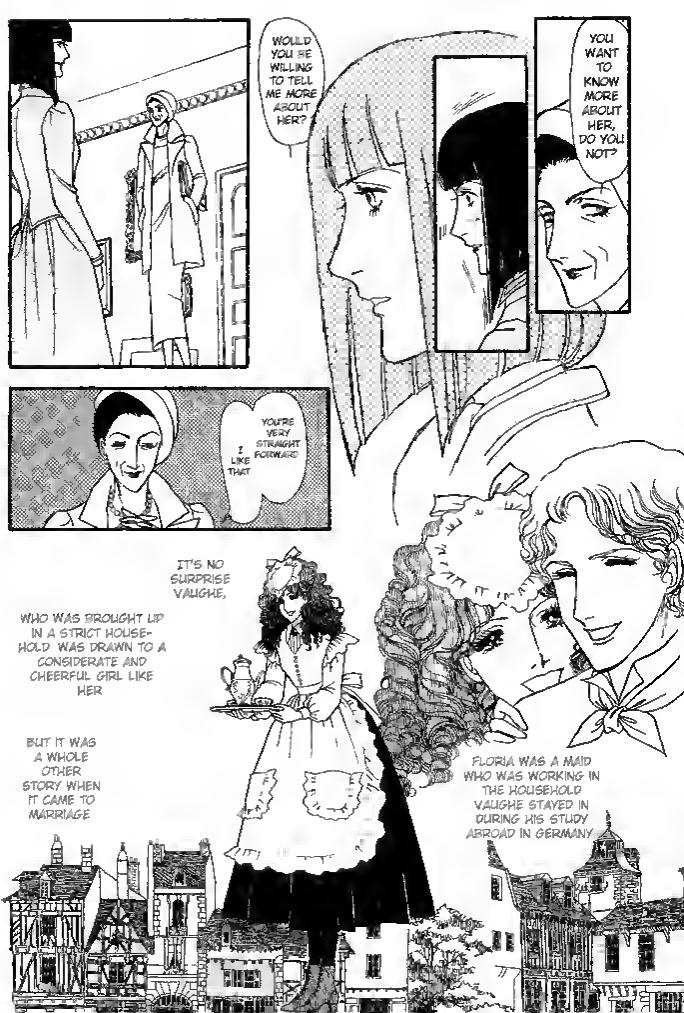
IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR HER, WHO KNOWS WHERE I WOULD'VE ENDED UP?
YES, SHE IS
IS SHE THAT IMPOR-TANT TO YOU
YOU'RE ALWAYS THINKING ABOUT HER.
OH, I WAS JUST THINKING THAT NATALIE MUST'VE RESEMBLED YOU GROWING UP
WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?
SHE'S MORE IMPORTANT TO ME THAN WORDS CAN DESCRIBE
IT'S NOT JUST THAT.
DO YOU FEEL THAT WAY BECAUSE SHE'S YOUR GUARDIAN?
FRANCIS
THEN WHAT ABOUT ME ?
WHAT ABOUT ME ...?

DOES FLORIA PIQUE YOUR CURIOSITY?


I'M WELL AWARE OF THAT. I DID COME WITH THEM, AFTER ALL.
"FLORIA"...?
IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR MR. LANBERRE, HE'S CURRENTLY WITH AN ART DEALER
Madame..

DESPITE US BEING ENGAGED SINCE I WAS YET A GIRL OF 14
VAUGHE SCRAPPED OUR ENGAGEMENT BECAUSE HE COULDN'T FORGET HER.

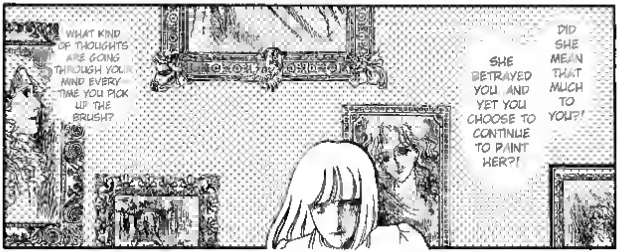

THE WOMAN WHOM MR. LANBERRE LOVED SO
SO HER NAME'S FLORIA


WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO TELL ME MORE ABOUT HER?
YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT HER, DO YOU NOT?
YOU'RE VERY STRAIGHT FORWARD
I LIKE THAT
IT'S NO SURPRISE VAUGHE,
WHO WAS BROUGHT UP IN A STRICT HOUSE-HOLD WAS DRAWN TO A CONSIDERATE AND CHEERFUL GIRL LIKE HER
BUT IT WAS A WHOLE OTHER STORY WHEN IT CAME TO MARRIAGE
FLORIA WAS A MAID WHO WAS WORKING IN THE HOUSEHOLD VAUGHE STAYED IN DURING HIS STUDY ABROAD IN GERMANY

HE WAS THE ELDEST SON OF EARL LANPERRE AND HE WAS THE ONE WHO WOULD BE GIVEN HIS TITLE IN THE FUTURE
THERE WAS NO WAY THAT SOMEONE LIKE HIM WOULD BE ABLE TO MARRY AN ORPHAN LIKE HER WHO WORKED AS A MAID
BUT HE WAS ADAMANT TO DO SO, AND SO HE IGNORED HIS FATHER'S WARNINGS...
She was paid off...?
IT WAS WHEN HE WENT BACK TO FRANCE TO ASK FOR HIS FATHER'S FORGIVENESS THAT SHE DISAPPEARED
DURING THE TIME THAT THEY WERE APART... SHE WAS PAID OFF TO GET OUT OF HIS LIFE OR SO I HEARD
EVER SINCE THEN HE'S MOVED OUT OF THAT HOUSEHOLD AND HAS LIVED HERE
HE WASN'T ABLE TO FORGET HER
TO THE CONTRARY HE'S STAYED SINGLE ALL THIS TIME AND HAS CONTINUED TO PAINT HER PORTRAIT
YES IT WAS QUITE A BIT OF MONEY ENOUGH TO BUY A CASTLE AT THE VERY LEAST
AND YET

DID I MEAN SO LITTLE TO YOU ?!
WHY COULDN'T YOU HAVE WAITED FOR ME .
WHY FLORIA ?!
YOU CAN'T BLAME HER FOR BEING DRAWN TO THE MONEY
THAT'S JUST THE KIND OF WOMAN SHE IS.
FORGET ABOUT THAT LOWLY ORPHAN OF A MAID.
NOW TAKE SHIFFONE'S HAND
SHE WILL BE YOUR FIANCEE.

EVEN NOW, I STILL REMEMBER AS CLEAR AS DAY THE EXPRESSION ON HIS FACE
IT WAS QUITE AN AWKWARD MOMENT TO SAY THE LEAST
I FIND YOU VERY CHARMING
I THINK IT'D DO YOU WELL TO HAVE CONFIDENCE IN YOURSELF.
I WISH YOU THE BEST OF LUCK
CLICK CLICK CLICK
HOWEVER, IN THE CASE THAT HE DOESN'T CHOOSE YOU, I'D SUGGEST YOU GIVE UP AND MOVE ON.
YOU'RE MUCH TOO YOUNG TO DRAG YOUR FEELINGS FOR A MAN WHO'S STILL PINING OVER A LOST LOVE
"FLORIA!"
"WHY FLORIA ?!"


WHAT KIND OF THOUGHTS ARE GOING THROUGH YOU... MIND EVERY TIME YOU PICK UP THE BRUSH?
SHE BETRAYED YOU, AND YET YOU CHOOSE TO CONTINUE TO PAINT HER?!
DID SHE MEAN THAT MUCH TO YOU?!

I WAS FINALLY ABLE TO COME TO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE ART DEALER
IT MUST'VE BEEN QUITE DULL TO BE HERE BY YOURSELF. I APOLOGIZE

I COULDN'T DO THAT
I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO DO SOMETHING THAT WOULD CAUSE ME AS MUCH PAIN AS THAT
AND YET WHY ARE YOUR PAINTINGS ALWAYS FULL OF WARMTH?
WHY VAUGHE ?!

OH, ABOUT THE SKATING, I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE BETTER TO DO SO ON NATURALLY FROZEN ICE DON'T YOU AGREE?

SO WE SHOULD ALL GO TO THE LAKE—

WHAT'S WRONG ?
I'M BACK!
HEY, IS THAT KITTY I BROUGHT HOME YESTERDAY DOING OKAY?
IT'S DOING FINE. QUITE WELL IN FACT.
OH, AND ALSO, MISS ELAINE HAS COME TO VISIT. SHE'S IN THE STUDIO
REALLY ?!
THEN I GUESS I CAN SHOW HER THE KITTEN!
I'LL GO AND GET IT SO YOU GO AHEAD OF ME, MILLFY
YOU KNOW WHERE THE STUDIO IS, DON'T YOU?
SURE!

I've cared about you for a long time, Vaughe.
Ever since I first met you.
Elaine ...
WOULD I NOT DO?
VAUGHE, AM I NOT CAPABLE OF EASING YOUR PAIN?
PLEASE LOOK AT ME!
VAUGHE, LOOK AT ME!
I CAN'T BELIEVE WHAT I JUST SAW...
WOW T-THAT TOOK ME OFF GUARD

OH, SO ELAINE'S FINALLY MADE THE FIRST MOVE
I OVERHEARD WHEN I WAS PASSING BY! OH, MY HEART'S STILL BEATING A MILE A MINUTE!
ELAINE?!
FRANCIS, BIG NEWS!
ELAINE'S MAKING AN ADVANCE ON MR. LANBERRE!
LET'S GO TO THE SUNROOM. IT'S BEST IF WE DON'T DISTURB THEM.
FRANCIS, AREN'T YOU GOING TO GO AND WATCH?
SHE'S VERY CHARMING. I'M SURE MR. LANBERRE THINKS THE SAME
I HOPE ALL GOES WELL. I KNOW SHE CARES FOR HIM A LOT
HOW DO YOU THINK HE'LL REACT?
OH, BUT I THINK IT'D BE FUN! I'M REALLY CURIOUS AS TO HOW THIS'LL TURN OUT!
Meuuu
I'VE SEEN SCENES LIKE THIS IN MOVIES BUT THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE SEEN IT IN REAL LIFE!
IF YOU'RE NOT GOING TO COME WITH ME THEN I'LL JUST GO ON MY OWN AND PEEK A BIT!
HEY, COME ON NOW

YOU'RE JUST AS CURIOUS AS ME TO FIND OUT HOW THIS'LL END AREN'T YOU?
WHY NOT? IT'S NOT AS IF I'D BE DISTURBING THEM.
AH!
STOP IT, MILLY.
IT'S NOT SOMETHING YOU SHOULD JUST STICK YOUR HEAD INTO OUT OF A SENSE OF CURIOSITY!
FOR YOU THIS MIGHT JUST BE ALL FUN AND GAMES, BUT ELAINE'S SERIOUS ABOUT HIM!
JUST CUT IT OUT!
are W- you Why yelling at me...
YOU NEED TO THINK MORE BEFORE YOU ACT.

Not even my parents've ever yelled at me before!
This is the first time I've ever been yelled at!
There's no reason for you to be so angry with me!
MEWWWWW
IT'S OUT OF SELFISHNESS THAT YOU'RE CRYING LIKE THAT
NOTHING'S CHANGED JUST BECAUSE YOU CRIED.
YOU WERE IN THE WRONG.
WAHHHHH
MEWWW

HE WON'T EVEN LOOK BACK
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME
THAT A PERSON HASN'T COMFORTED ME BECAUSE I CRIED
PLEASE GO TO THE ESTATE AS SOON AS YOU CAN!
SIR, TERRIBLE NEWS! THE ELDER MASTER HAS COLLAPSED!
TO THINK A STRONG WOMAN SUCH AS HER COULD BECOME LIKE THIS
ELAINE

FATHER ... ?!
FRANCIS, I'M SORRY ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED EARLIER
I WAS OUT OF LINE
CREEAKK...
ARE YOU THERE FRANCIS ?
PERHAPS HE WENT OUTSIDE?

Flip Flip
Please come home already
Natalie
I want to see you
Jane to go and see
FRANCIS WON'T DRAW ANYONE BUT MISS NATALIE!
NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES I ASK FRANCIS, HE WON'T PAINT MY PORTRAIT.
MISS NATALIE IS ALL FRANCIS EVER THINKS ABOUT
NO, IT CAN'T BE. NO MATTER HOW IMPORTANT SHE MAY BE TO HIM, IT'S PRACTICALLY AS IF HE'S OBSESSED WITH HER...!
IS IT JUST BECAUSE SHE'S HIS GUARDIAN?
BUT WHY ?!

NO IT'S THE VERY SAME!
IT'S VERY SIMILAR
IT'S SIMILAR TO WHAT I LOOK LIKE WHEN I TALK ABOUT FRANCIS
WHENEVER FRANCIS TALKS ABOUT NATALIE
NOOOO FRANCIS!
IT'S THE VERY SAME!
HE LOVES HER!
HE LOVES!

JSHOUJO SCANS

we are currently searching high & low for new staff!

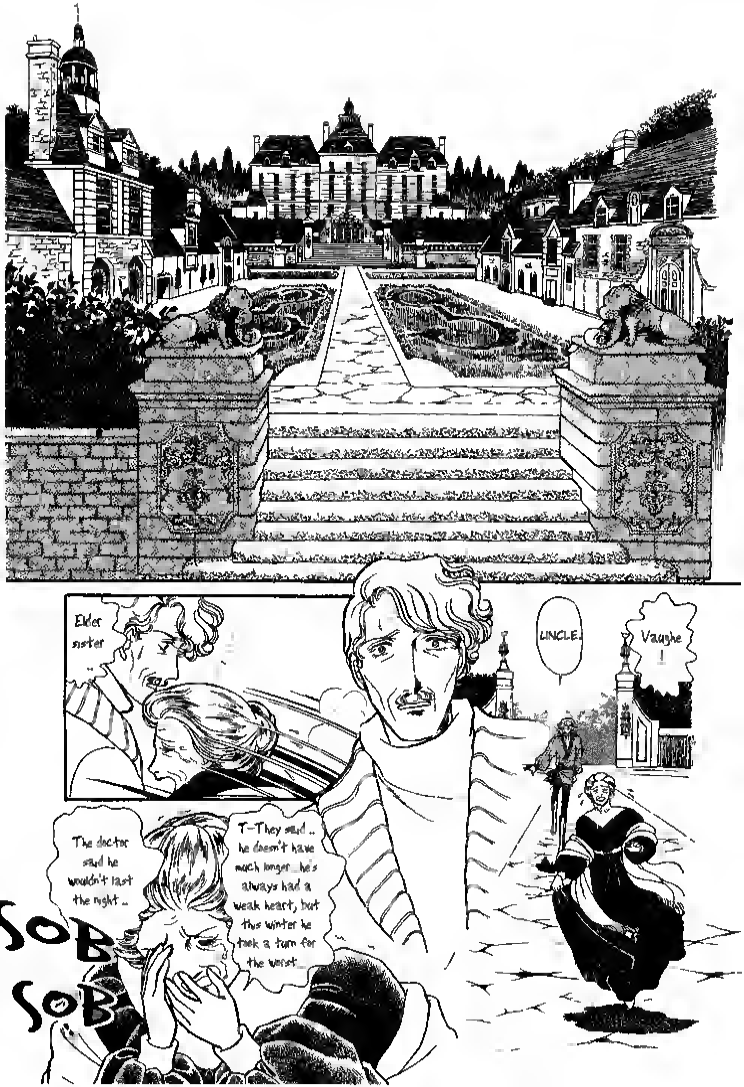
If you know anyone who is interested in
-editing (we need this the most!)
-typesetting or cleaning
- J->E / C->E translating
-proofreading

Please contact our admin Vally at valychan86@hotmail.com

THANKS FOR READING!
-jshoujo staff

Volume 3 Chapter 20

THE PRINCE WHO SHOWED UP IN THE VERY FIRST FAIRY TALE I EVER READ
WAS A GOLDEN-HAIRED PRINCE OUT TO SAVE THE PRINCESS FROM EVIL. HE LOOKED A LOT LIKE FRANCIS
AS FOR ME, I WAS THE SLEEPING BEAUTY WAITING FOR THE KISS FROM THE PRINCE
BUT THE PRINCE WHO WAS ENAMORED WITH THE QUEEN, WOULD NOT EVEN SEND A GLANCE MY WAY
I'M HERE SLEEPING PLEASE REALIZE MY PRESENCE AND COME TO ME.
WAKE ME FROM MY DEEP SLEEP WITH YOUR LOVE

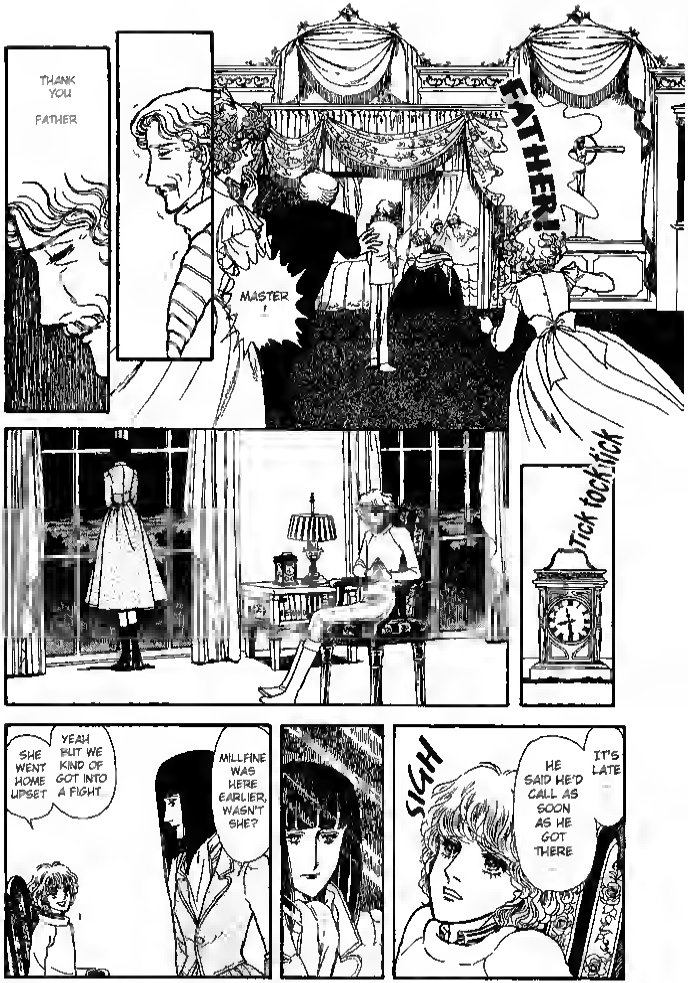

Elder sister...
UNCLE.
Vaughe!
The doctor said he wouldn't last the night...
T-They said... he doesn't have much longer... he's always had a weak heart, but this winter he took a turn for the worst...
SOB
SOB

So you're the only one whom he can rely on.
SOB SOB
My husband passed on before me, and Michele said he has no plans to take over the household,
He's been asking for you.
Vaughe, what happened in the past is—
I KNOW
FATHER, VAUGHE IS HERE
But ..
TAKE IT OFF
I SAID, TAKE IT OFF
wh ooze... wh eeze...
SO YOU'VE FINALLY COME

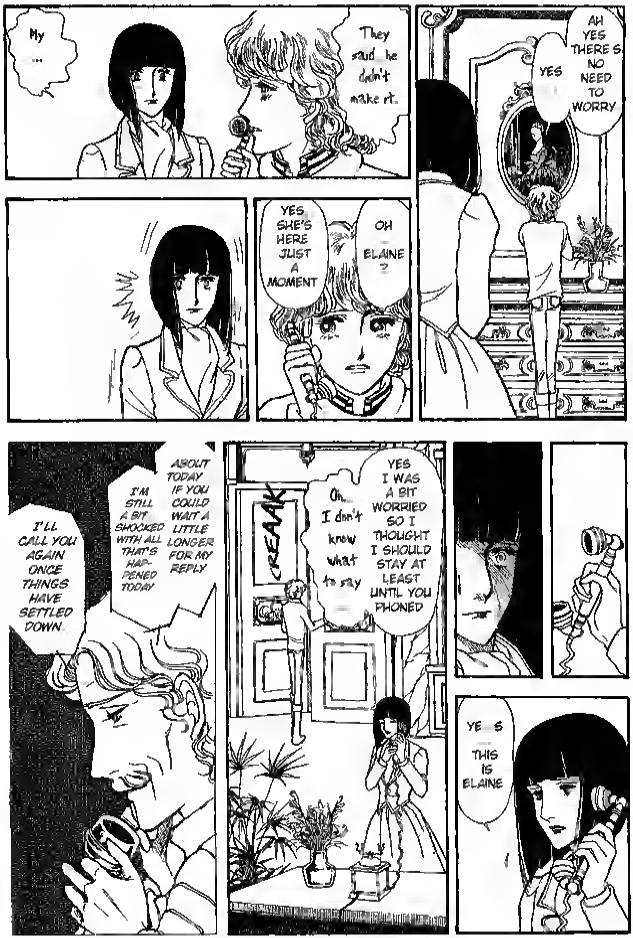
IT MIGHT AFFECT YOUR BODY
HAH, I'M NOT GOING TO LAST MORE THAN A DAY OR TWO ANYWAY
I'M QUITE AWARE OF MY HEALTH
THERE IS SOMETHING I HAVE TO APOLOGIZE TO YOU FOR.
I NEED TO GET THIS BURDEN OFF MY CHEST SO THAT I WILL BE ABLE TO REST IN PEACE ONCE THE TIME COMES
IT WAS 1939, AS I RECALL
IT WAS THE YEAR THAT FRANCE DECLARED WAR ON GERMANY
KNOWING THAT WE WOULD BE AT WAR WITH THE GERMANS I COULDN'T ALLOW YOU TO MARRY A GERMAN ORPHAN
I UNDERSTAND WHAT KIND OF POSITION YOU WERE IN FATHER, BUT I ---
YOU COULDN'T BELIEVE THAT SHE WOULD JUST ACCEPT THE MONEY AND DISAPPEAR FROM YOUR LIFE IS THAT IT?
NO I COULD NOT
SINCE THERE WAS NO WAY FOR ME TO CHECK WITH HER DIRECTLY
THE WAR STARTED RIGHT AFTER I CAME BACK TO FRANCE TO ASK FOR YOUR FORGIVENESS,
AND THE YEAR AFTER THAT WE SURRENDERED TO GERMANY

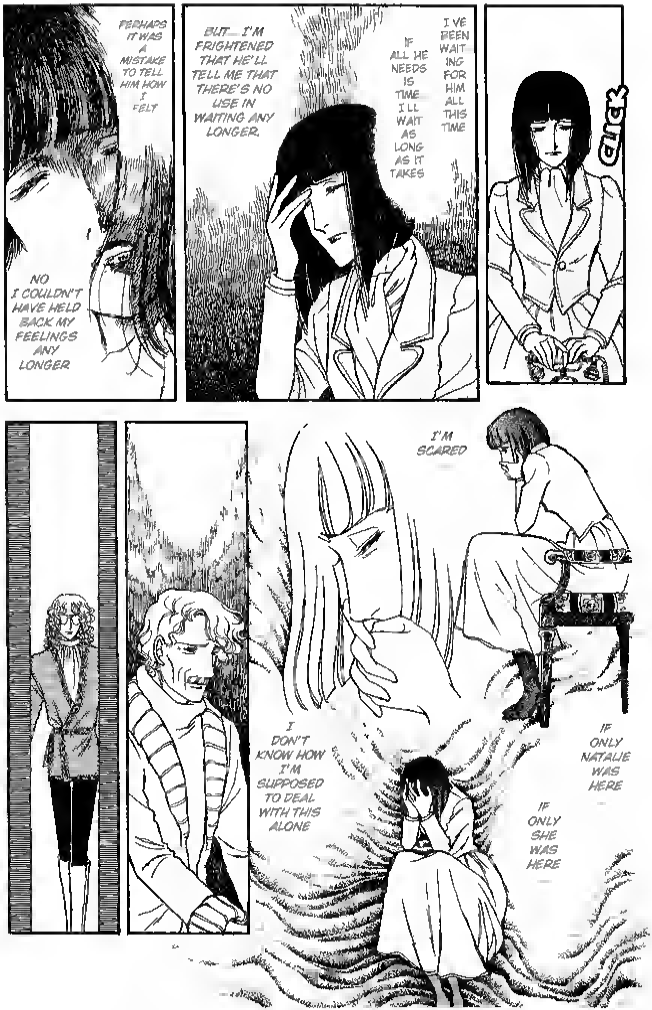
I DIDN'T TELL YOU THIS, BUT RIGHT AFTER SHE DISAPPEARED A SMALL PACKAGE ARRIVED
AND IN IT WAS THE MONEY I HAD GIVEN HER
SHE MUST HAVE WANTED TO MAKE IT CLEAR SHE DID NOT DO IT FOR THE MONEY
AFTER WWII HAD ENDED, I TRIED GOING TO GERMANY
BUT AFTER SIX YEARS OF BEING AT WAR THE TOWNS WERE IN RUINS AND THERE WAS NO WAY FOR ME TO TRACK HER DOWN
I REMEMBER IT BORE A STAMP FROM THE BRITTANY PENINSULA.
EVEN THOUGH SHE PARTED FROM YOU, SHE MUST'VE WANTED TO LIVE NEAR YOU.
What?
That's why... I wanted to apologize... before I died.
WHEEZE
WHEEZE
Looking back on it now, it was terribly cruel what I did to her...
I'm sure she must've battled many hardships, what with being a lone German female living in France

DID SHE LEAVE FOR MY SAKE?
SO ... FLORIA WAS IN FRANCE ALL ALONG?!
and tell her... I left a portion of my fortune to her...
Wheeze Wheeze
please tell her how sorry I am...
If you... manage to track her down...
... and ...
FATHER!
GRAMPS !

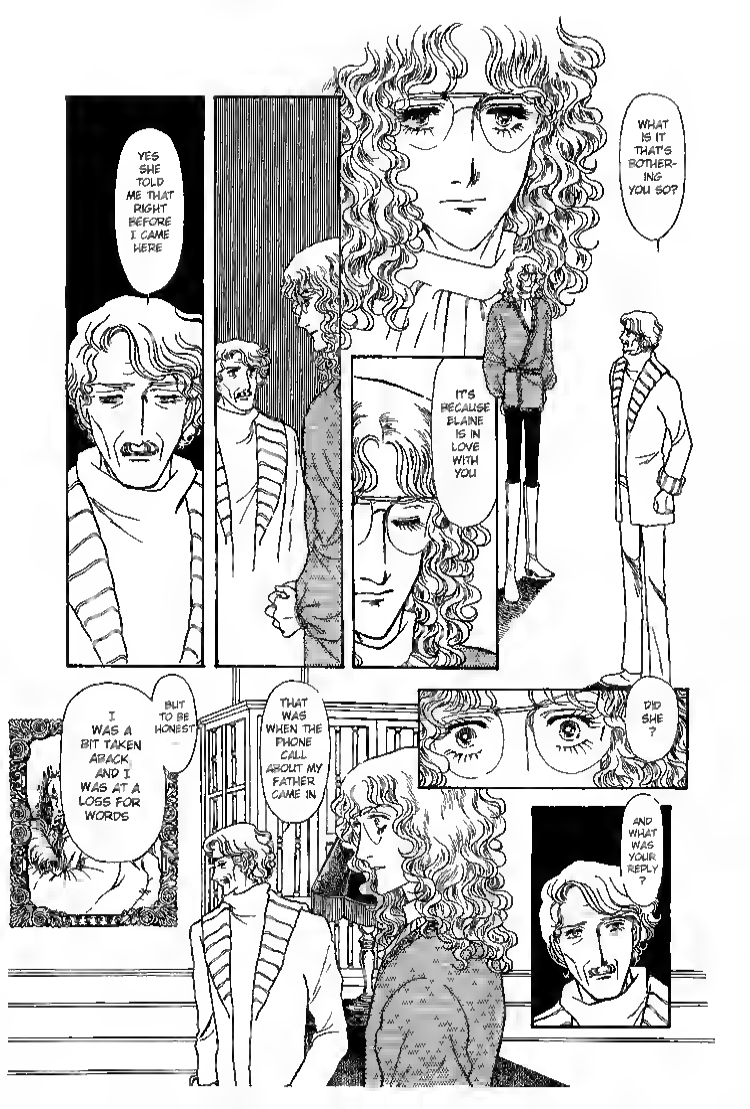

THANK YOU FATHER
MASTER
FATHER!
Tick tock tick
SHE WENT HOME UPSET
YEAH BUT WE KIND OF GOT INTO A FIGHT
MILLFINE WAS HERE EARLIER, WASN'T SHE?
SIGH
HE SAID HE'D CALL AS SOON AS HE GOT THERE
IT'S LATE

I'M USUALLY VERY FOND OF HER, BUT SHE DOES HAVE A BIT OF A SELF-CENTERED SIDE TO HER
BUT...IT'S REALLY NOT GOOD FOR ME TO YELL AT A GIRL, NO MATTER THE CIR-CUM-STANCES
MY, HOW OUT OF THE ORDI-NARY!
YOU TWO USUALLY GET ALONG SO WELL. TO THINK YOU TWO WOULD GET INTO A FIGHT!
WHAT WAS THE REASON BEHIND IT?
Oh ...
uh... it was nothing really
RRRR...
HELLO!
Oh, yes, this is him speaking.
What?
Oh ...


My ...
They said he didn't make it.
YES
AH YES THERE'S NO NEED TO WORRY
YES, SHE'S HERE JUST A MOMENT
OH ELAINE?
YES I WAS A BIT WORRIED SO I THOUGHT I SHOULD STAY AT LEAST UNTIL YOU PHONED
Oh... I don't know what to say
BEEP
YES... THIS IS ELAINE
I'M STILL A BIT SHOCKED WITH ALL THAT'S HAPPENED TODAY
ABOUT TODAY IF YOU COULD WAIT A LITTLE LONGER FOR MY REPLY
I'LL CALL YOU AGAIN ONCE THINGS HAVE SETTLED DOWN.


PERHAPS IT WAS A MISTAKE TO TELL HIM HOW I FELT
NO I COULDN'T HAVE HELD BACK MY FEELINGS ANY LONGER
BUT... I'M FRIGHTENED THAT HE'LL TELL ME THAT THERE'S NO USE IN WAITING ANY LONGER.
IF ALL HE NEEDS IS TIME I'LL WAIT AS LONG AS IT TAKES
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR HIM ALL THIS TIME
CLICK
I'M SCARED
I DON'T KNOW HOW I'M SUPPOSED TO DEAL WITH THIS ALONE
IF ONLY NATALIE WAS HERE
IF ONLY SHE WAS HERE

SHE MIGHT BE MARRIED, YOU KNOW...
YES, THAT'S WHAT I PLAN ON DOING.
ARE YOU GOING TO GO LOOK FOR HER?
AND IT MIGHT BE THE CASE THAT YOU MIGHT NEVER BE ABLE TO TRACK HER DOWN...
SHE MIGHT EVEN BE DEAD
YOU'RE RIGHT
WHAT IF SHE'S STILL SINGLE AND STILL CARES FOR YOU VERY MUCH?
IF SHE'S LIVING HAPPILY I HAVE NO INTENTION OF DISTURBING THAT LIFE
I WANT TO MAKE CER TAIN THOUGH
NOT JUST FOR ME BUT FOR MY FATHER AS WELL

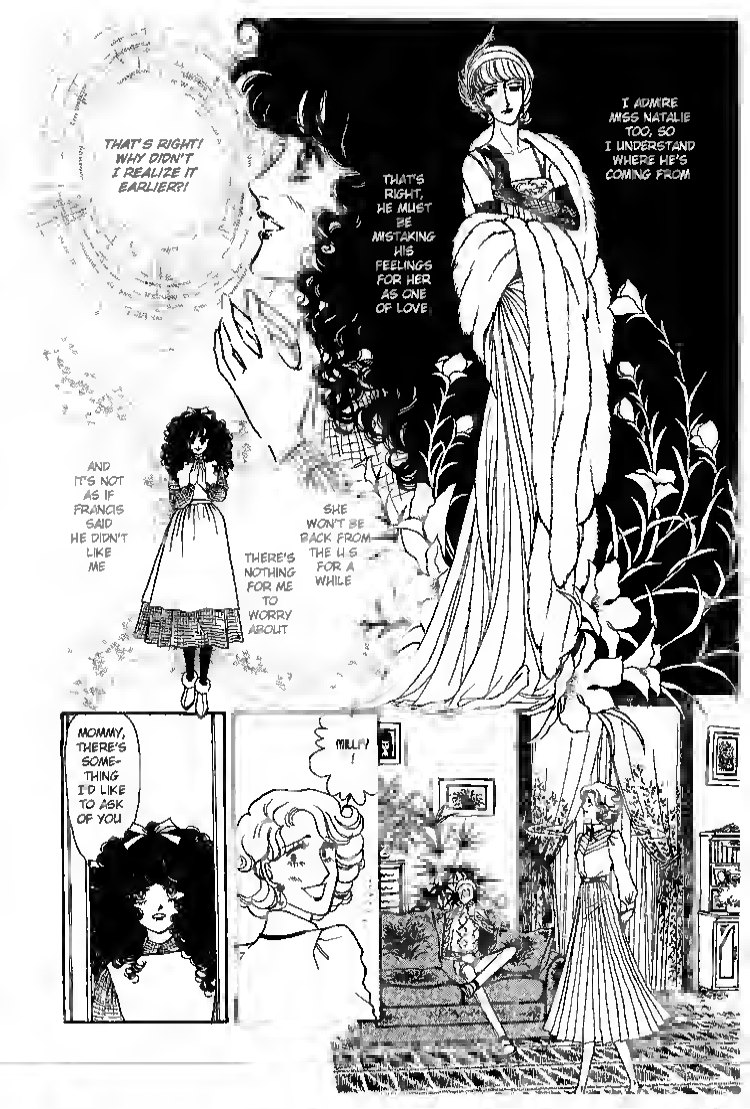

WHAT IS IT THAT'S BOTHERING YOU SO?
YES SHE TOLD ME THAT RIGHT BEFORE I CAME HERE
IT'S BECAUSE BLAINE IS IN LOVE WITH YOU
DID SHE ?
AND WHAT WAS YOUR REPLY ?
THAT WAS WHEN THE PHONE CALL ABOUT MY FATHER CAME IN
BUT TO BE HONEST
I WAS A BIT TAKEN ABACK AND I WAS AT A LOSS FOR WORDS

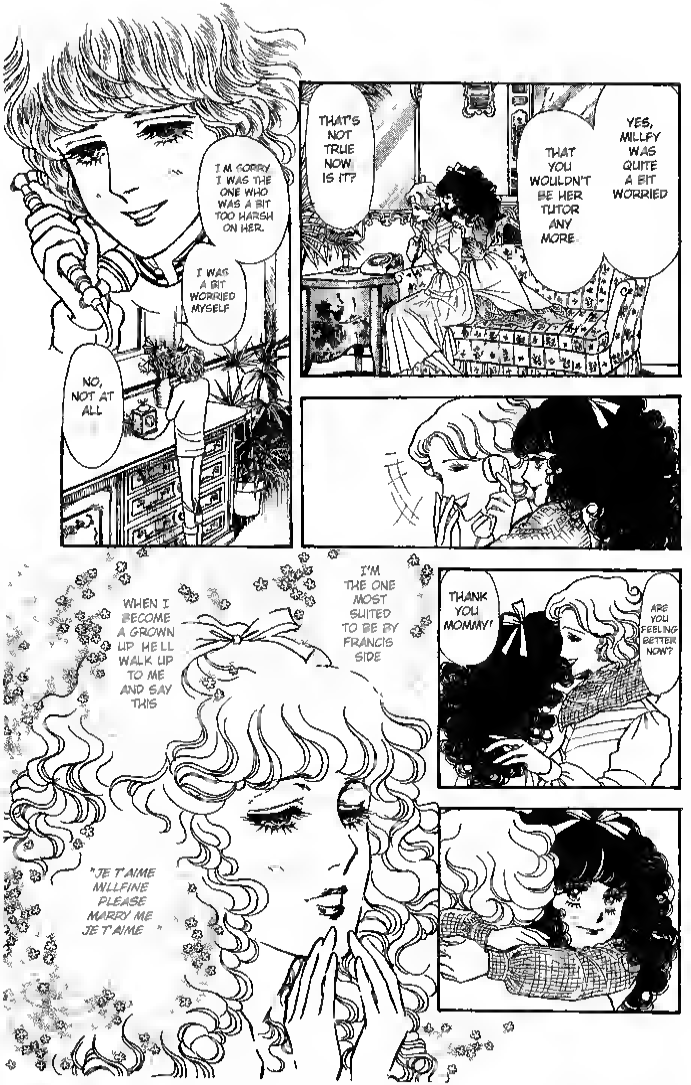
SHE GAZED AT ME UNWAVERINGLY WITH TEARS IN HER EYES
AND IN THAT MOMENT I DID FEEL A RUSH OF AFFECTION FOR HER.
THE INTENSITY OF HER LOVE TOUCHED ME.
AND I FELT THAT IF I COULD I'D LIKE TO RESPOND TO THOSE FEELINGS
I'D PROBABLY HURT HER
IF I DO GO LOOK FOR FLORIA
BUT I CAN'T STOP MYSELF. I MUST GO
WHAT IF SHE'S MARRIED?
WHAT IF SHE'S DEAD?
WHAT IF SHE'D COMPLETELY FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT YOU?
THEN WOULD YOU
THAT WOULD BE MUCH TOO SELFISH OF ME TO DO SO

BLAINE'S SMART AND CONSIDERATE
THEN WHAT?
"I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO DOING SOMETHING LIKE THAT TO HER"
SHE'D NEVER DO ANYTHING TO CAUSE TROUBLE FOR MY UNCLE
SHE'D TRY TO DESTROY HER FEELINGS FOR HIM,
AND SHE'D DO HER BEST TO ACT AS IF EVERYTHING WAS FINE
IS SHE GOING TO DROWN HERSELF IN SORROW AGAIN?
AND LITTLE BY LITTLE SHE'D START CRUMBLING APART ON THE INSIDE
ARE YOU SAYING
THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO BUT WATCH HER AS SHE DOES THAT TO HERSELF ?

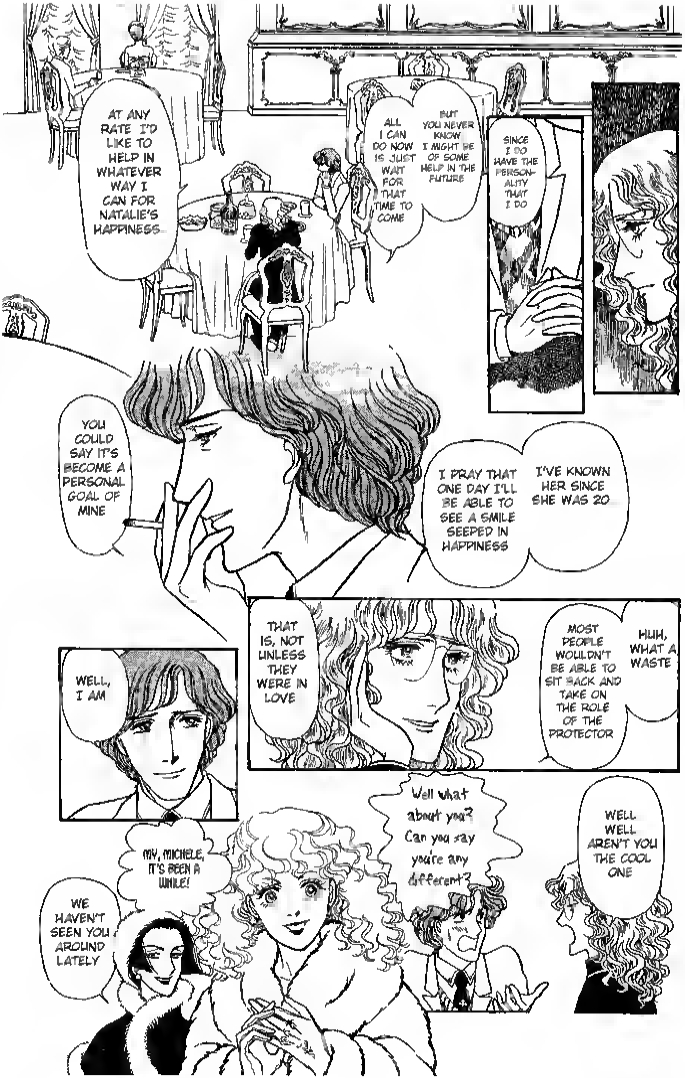
She hasn't left her room ever since she returned home!
Milfy's acting very strangely!
WHAT'S WRONG?
Milfy!
Milfy, please!
NO!
LEAVE ME ALONE! I'M THINKING!
MILLFY, OPEN UP!
BANG BANG
She usually always tells me how her day went..
I wonder if she got into a fight with Francis?
See? I told you! There's definitely something wrong!
SO SHE SAYS
WHY FRANCIS?!
SURE, MISS NATALIE IS PRETTY, BUT SHE'S OLD ENOUGH TO BE YOUR MOTHER!

THERE'S NO WAY I CAN TELL ANOTHER THAT THE PERSON FRANCIS LOVES IS NOT ME.
THERE'S NO ONE I CAN CONFIDE IN ABOUT THIS.
BUT MISS NATALIE!
BEING A GUARDIAN'S ALMOST THE SAME AS BEING THAT PERSON'S PARENT THERE'S NO WAY SHE COULD FEEL THE SAME AWAY.
I WONDER HOW MISS NATALIE FEELS ABOUT FRANCIS?
SHE BROUGHT HIM UP PRACTICALLY AS HER VERY OWN...
IT'S NOT STRANGE FOR A BOY TO FALL IN LOVE WITH AN OLDER WOMAN
BUT THEY SAY THAT IT'S NOT LOVE BUT SIMPLY AN ADMIRATION OF THE OTHER.
THEY ONLY REALIZE IT AFTER THEY'VE BEEN TURNED DOWN


I ADMIRE MISS NATALIE TOO, SO I UNDERSTAND WHERE HE'S COMING FROM
THAT'S RIGHT, HE MUST BE MISTAKING HIS FEELINGS FOR HER AS ONE OF LOVE
THAT'S RIGHT! WHY DIDN'T I REALIZE IT EARLIER!
SHE WON'T BE BACK FROM THE U.S FOR A WHILE
THERE'S NOTHING FOR ME TO WORRY ABOUT
AND IT'S NOT AS IF FRANCIS SAID HE DIDN'T LIKE ME
MILLY?!
MOMMY, THERE'S SOMETHING I'D LIKE TO ASK OF YOU


I'M SORRY I WAS THE ONE WHO WAS A BIT TOO HARSH ON HER.
I WAS A BIT WORRIED MYSELF
NO, NOT AT ALL
THAT'S NOT TRUE NOW, IS IT?
YES, MILLFY WAS QUITE A BIT WORRIED
THAT YOU WOULDN'T BE HER TUTOR ANY MORE
THANK YOU MOMMY!
ARE YOU FEELING BETTER NOW?
WHEN I BECOME A GROWN UP HE'LL WALK UP TO ME AND SAY THIS
I'M THE ONE MOST SUITED TO BE BY FRANCIS SIDE
"JE T'AIME MILLFINE PLEASE MARRY ME JE T'AIME"

I HEARD A LOT HAS BEEN GOING ON IN YOUR LIFE LATELY
YEAH BUT THINGS ARE FINALLY STARTING TO SETTLE DOWN
IT WAS ONLY JUST A WHILE AGO THAT LINGLE FINALLY GOT A CHANCE TO GO HOME THOUGH
HE MIGHT BE SEEING ELAINE RIGHT NOW
Framboise
WELL AT ANY RATE IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE YOU WERE THE ONE TO SUGGEST WE GO OUT SOMEWHERE
I THOUGHT LATELY THAT RESIDENT SATAN AT YOUR WORK-PLACE HAD BEEN GIVING YOU NO SLACK WHY THE CHANGE IN PACE?
OH LAY OFF IT...
THINGS HAVE BEEN BUSY AT WORK THOUGH, I ADMIT
I MUST ADMIT THAT I HAVE BEEN FEELING A BIT DOWN LATELY,
BUT MORE OUT OF KNOWING MY POWER-LESSNESS THAN ANYTHING
I FEEL ASHAMED OF MYSELF AS A MAN HOW
THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO BUT WATCH


AT ANY RATE I'D LIKE TO HELP IN WHATEVER WAY I CAN FOR NATALIE'S HAPPINESS
ALL I CAN DO NOW IS JUST WAIT FOR THAT TIME TO COME
BUT YOU NEVER KNOW. I MIGHT BE OF SOME HELP IN THE FUTURE
SINCE I DO HAVE THE PERSONALITY THAT I DO
YOU COULD SAY IT'S BECOME A PERSONAL GOAL OF MINE
I PRAY THAT ONE DAY I'LL BE ABLE TO SEE A SMILE SEEPED IN HAPPINESS
I'VE KNOWN HER SINCE SHE WAS 20
THAT IS, NOT UNLESS THEY WERE IN LOVE
MOST PEOPLE WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO SIT BACK AND TAKE ON THE ROLE OF THE PROTECTOR
HUH, WHAT A WASTE
WELL, I AM
MY, MICHELE, IT'S BEEN A WHILE!
WE HAVEN'T SEEN YOU AROUND LATELY
Well what about you? Can you say you're any different?
WELL WELL AREN'T YOU THE COOL ONE

OUI
MIND IF WE JOIN YOU MR HANDSOME?
IT MUST BE DULL WHAT WITH JUST YOU TWO MEN
HEY HOW'VE YOU BEEN?
I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WENT OUT DRINKING WITH OTHER MEN
OH? YOU DIDN'T KNOW THAT MY TRUE TASTES LIE WITH MEN?
NO GIRL HAS EVER BEEN ABLE TO MAKE MICHELE FALL FOR HER.
HE'S KIND TO EVERYONE BUT THAT'S PRETTY MUCH WHERE HE DRAWS THE LINE
WELL I HAVE NO TIME TO ENGAGE IN THE LOVE GAMES YOU'RE SO FOND OF.
WHAT? BUT THE THRILL IT BRINGS IS THE BEST PART!
I CAN'T KEEP UP WITH WOMEN WHO THINK OF LOVE AS FASHION
YOU DON'T CARE ONE WAY OR ANOTHER AS LONG AS THE MAN'S A LOOKER, DO YOU?
OH? I COULD SAY THE SAME FOR YOU
I'M KIDDING THOUGH I DO ACT THE WAY I DO. I AM PRETTY OLD-FASHIONED.
THAT WAY OF THINKING DOESN'T SUIT YOU
I WANT TO BE WITH SOMEONE WHO COULD BE WITH NO ONE ELSE BUT ME
HMMM...

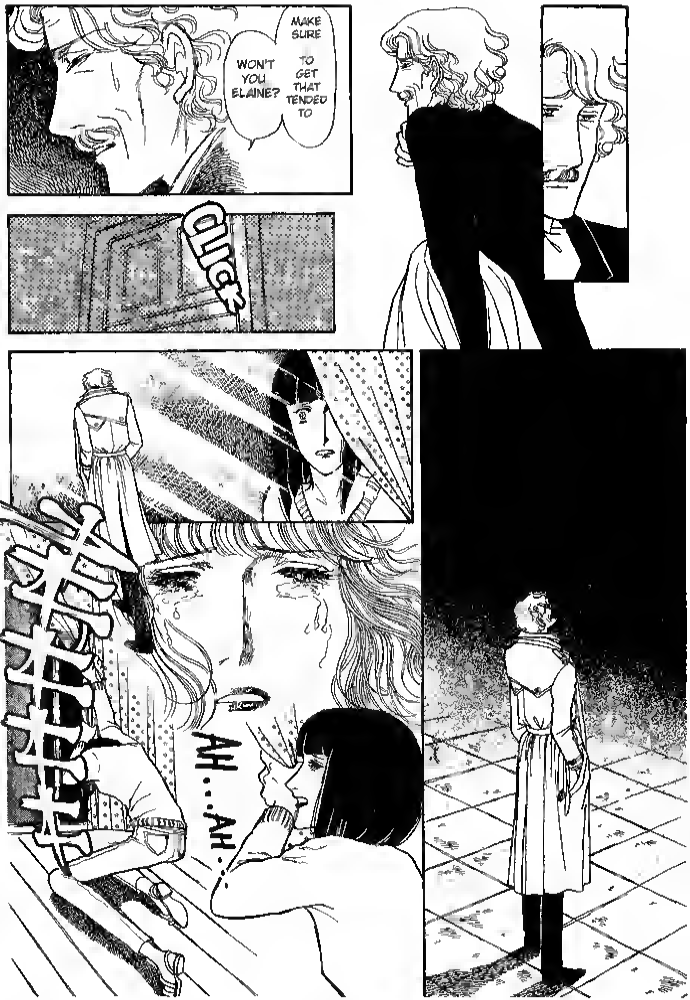
FINE THEN, I'LL SETTLE FOR THIS BOY RIGHT HERE!
NOT ONLY IS HE HANDSOME BUT HE SEEMS THE LOYAL TYPE
HAHAHA
HAHAHA
PLANCE(S)
WHAT'S WRONG? YOU'VE BEEN LOOKING AT THE CLOCK EVER SINCE WE GOT HERE
OH, IT'S JUST
I CAN GUESS WHY A GIRL AM I RIGHT?
SORRY, BUT I BETTER GET GOING
OH, BUT WHY?
THE NIGHT'S ONLY JUST BEGUN
MY UNCLE TOLD ME
THAT HE'S GOING IN SEARCH OF HIS OLD LOVER
APPARENTLY SHE'S LIVING IN FRANCE

THAT'S RIGHT
Ah ... then ...
I'D RATHER NOT FOLLOW DOWN YOUR FOOTSTEPS, SO PRAY FOR ME THAT IT'S NOT FOR LOVE.
I'M NOT EVEN SURE MYSELF.
TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH,
BECAUSE YOU FEEL RESPONSIBILITY FOR KNOWING?
IS THE REASON WHY IT'S ON YOUR MIND?

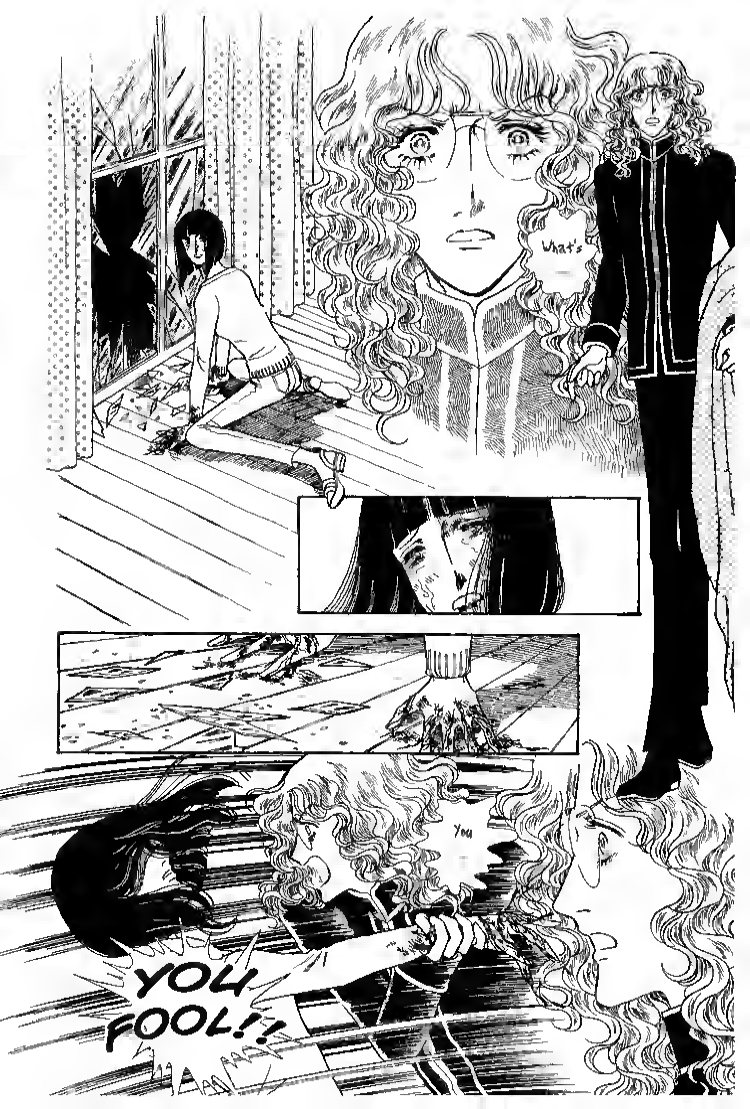
SO YOU'RE GOING ...?
I'M SORRY BUT I CAN'T RESPOND TO YOUR FEELINGS
WOULD YOU like another cup of tea
CLATTER
CLATTER CLATTER CLATTER
ダッ

We best get that tended to!
You're bleeding, Elaine!
FLING!
Don't touch me anymore!
IT'LL ONLY LEAD TO ME WAITING FOR YOU AGAIN!
OTHERWISE, IT'LL ONLY LEAD TO ME HOPING
DON'T SHOW ME ANY KINDNESS!

I can stand on my own just fine...
WOBBLE WOBBLE
I can stand on my own...
Please, just leave
Good-bye Vaughn...
Than...k you


MAKE SURE TO GET THAT TENDED TO
WON'T YOU ELAINE?
click
AH...AH...
すすすす

NOT ANY MORE
I CAN'T STAND ON MY OWN ...
I CAN'T STAND ...
HELP ME
I AM SUCH A LIAR!

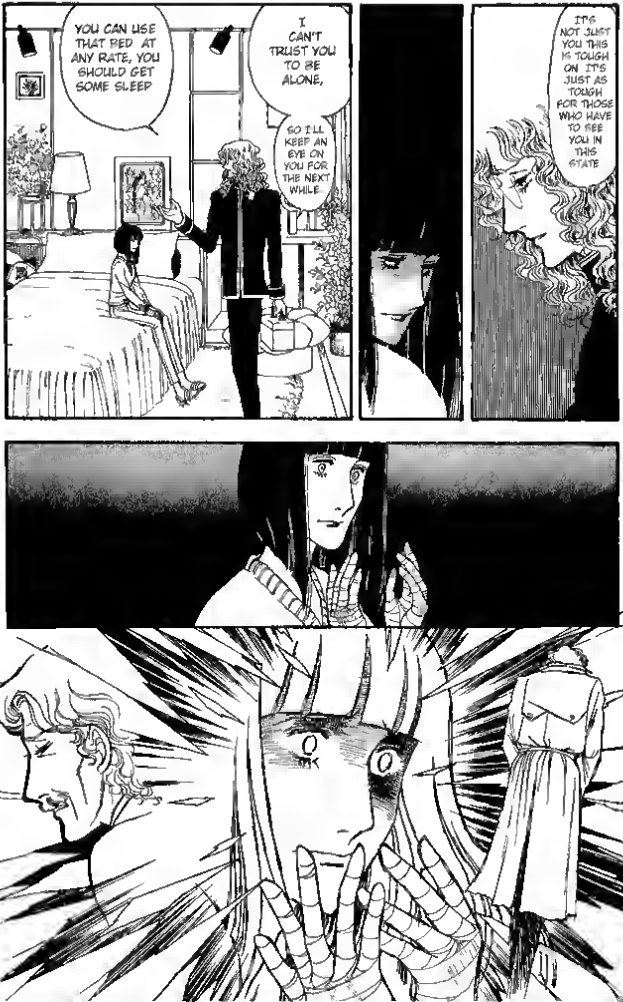

What's
You
YOU FOOL!?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING ?!
DO YOU WANT TO DIE?!
COME WITH ME!
I don't care.. anymore.. what happens to me.

Volume 3 Chapter 21

Ah!
Click
Michele, what are you
YOU SAID YOU DIDN'T CARE ANY-MORE, DIDN'T YOU?!
SO THEN WHAT DO YOU CARE WHAT I DO?!
I HATE THOSE WHO SQUANDER THEMSELVES LIKE THIS! IT IRRITATES ME!
YOU'RE PATHETIC!
YOU'RE NO BETTER THAN SCUM!

FLINCH!
GIVE ME YOUR HAND!
OR DO YOU WANT TO GET ME EVEN MORE ANGRY?!
YOUR HAND
YOU SHOULDN'T DO THINGS LIKE THIS ANY MORE


YOU CAN USE THAT BED AT ANY RATE, YOU SHOULD GET SOME SLEEP
I CAN'T TRUST YOU TO BE ALONE,
SO I'LL KEEP AN EYE ON YOU FOR THE NEXT WHILE.
IT'S NOT JUST YOU THIS IS TOUGH ON IT'S JUST AS TOUGH FOR THOSE WHO HAVE TO SEE YOU IN THIS STATE

Ela-
Michele, Vaughe Vaughe is—
no longer—
AHHHH
DON'T HOLD BACK. LET IT ALL OUT.
CRY, ELAINE!

CRY AND LET IT ALL OUT...
UNTIL YOU FALL ASLEEP EXHAUSTED FROM CRYING LIKE A CHILD WOULD, I'LL BE BY YOUR SIDE
HEY
GOOD MORNING

RUSTLE
My
D-DON'T TELL ME I
DIZA
WHAT
DON'T YOU SEE HOW YOU'RE STILL CLOTHED?
I WOULDN'T TRY TO MAKE A MOVE ON A WOMAN CRYING OVER ANOTHER MAN
I HAVE SOME PRIDE TOO, YOU KNOW...
Whoa there!
OH DANGIT!
THEN! GUESS I LET SLIP PAST A GREAT OPPORTUNITY!
DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE STILL A VIR—
WHAT'S WITH THAT CHILDISH REACTION THOUGH?
SMILE
SLY
Oh,
Now, now, you shouldn't try to use your hands 'til you want to let me you can do that AFTER they've healed.
I'm not!
DON'T MAKE FUN OF ME!

I haven't packed or anything...
B-But wait, Michele
LET'S HOP ONTO THE FIRST TRAIN THAT ARRIVES AT THE STATION
WELL, I BETTER GET GOING
YOU HEARD ME. I'M GOING TO TAKE HER WHEREVER SHE WANTS TO GO FOR AS LONG AS SHE WANTS
H-HEY ... WAIT!
You're going on a VACA-TION?!
WITH BLAINE?
LET'S NOT COME BACK UNTIL YOU'RE ABLE TO STEP INTO THAT ROOM AGAIN WITHOUT FEELING THE NEED TO COLLAPSE
And at any rate, I'm in no mood to go on a vacation!
But I haven't with me any money!
WE CAN JUST BUY THE NECESSI-TIES ALONG THE WAY
WHISTLE

YOU LOOK LIKE A WHOLE NOTHER PERSON
YOU LOOK STUNNING.
WHY NOT TRY OUT A NEW HAIR STYLE?
OH, AND I THINK A FRESH GREEN COLORED DRESS WOULD LOOK LOVELY ON YOU.
YOU'LL FEEL MUCH LIGHTER
WE'RE ON OUR HONEY-MOON.
OH, A MARRIED COUPLE I SEE?
WELL ISN'T THAT NICE

I'M
I'M LAUGHING
GIGGLE
AND HE WON'T LISTEN TO A WORD THEY SAY—
HE PULLS PEOPLE THIS WAY AND THAT
WHAT A STRANGE PERSON
WHAT A STRANGE PERSON
I'M LAUGHING
WELCOME BACK!

I'M SURPRISED THEY'D DECIDE TO GO ON A VACATION THOUGH SO OUT OF THE BLUE!
HE SAID THEY WON'T BE BACK FOR A WHILE BUT TO NOT WORRY
SCHOOL WILL BE STARTING SOON SO SOMEONE WILL BE TAKING OVER IN MY PLACE WHILE I'M GONE
I CAN'T EXPECT TO FIND HER SO EASILY
No luck ...?
WITH ELAINE?
HE SAID HE'S GOING TO GO ON A VACATION WITH ELAINE
I RECEIVED A PHONE CALL FROM MR MICHELE
SO MICHELE AND ELAINE
IS THAT RIGHT?
HOW WAS YOUR BREAK? DO ANYTHING INTERESTING?
HEY
LET ME GUESS YOU WENT SWING OVER THE BREAK?

I STILL FIND IT HARD TO BELIEVE THAT YOU'RE ACTUALLY FRIENDS WITH HIM.
FRANCIS!
Whoa, it's Feihan
HUH?!
YOU HAVE TO HEAR THIS! OUR STUDY TRIP'S GOING TO BE TO THE US!
THEY MUST BE GOING TO THE US THIS YEAR. HOW LUCKY!
THE PEOPLE WHO WON A PRIZE IN THE ART COMPETITION GET TO GO ON A TRIP TO THE DIFFERENT ART MUSEUMS IN THE SUMMER.
No, DUMMY
DID YOU WIN THE LOTTERY OR WHAT?
YOU GET TO GO TO AMERICA?!
I'LL BE ABLE TO SEE NATALIE THEN!
TO THE U.S.?!

YOU UNDERESTIMATED MY SKILLS AS AN ARTIST?
DON'T TELL ME
YOU'RE GOING TOO? THIS IS AMAZING!
I HEARD WE'RE THE ONLY ONES FROM THIS DISTRICT THAT ARE GOING
ONLY TEN PEOPLE FROM ALL THE COLLÈGES IN FRANCE HAVE BEEN CHOSEN. DON'T YOU THINK THAT MAKES US REALLY LUCKY ?!
YIPEE
I'M GOING TO GO THERE AND SURPRISE HER! I BETTER TELL EVERYONE NOT TO TELL HER I'M COMING!
ONCE SUMMER COMES I'LL BE ABLE TO SEE NATALIE!
I WONDER HOW SHE'LL REACT!
OH, IF ONLY IT COULD BE SUMMER ALREADY!
THIS ISN'T A DREAM! I'LL BE ABLE TO SEE HER!

I DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW MANY DAYS IT'S BEEN SINCE WE STARTED ON THIS TRIP
ARE YOU REALLY OKAY TO HAVE JUST LEFT YOUR JOB LIKE THIS!?
DO YOU FEEL LIKE GOING BACK?
WELL, WHEN I THINK ABOUT YOUR WORK
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME I'M HAVING PRETTY FUN ON THIS TRIP.
WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?
DO YOU WANT TO KNOW THE REASON?

YOU DON'T NEED THIS ANY-MORE
THE REST WILL COME WITH TIME
WELL FROM THIS DAY ON, I'M CLOSING UP SHOP
WOULD YOU LIKE TO FORMALIZE AN EXCLUSIVE CONTRACT WITH ME?
SINCE WE DON'T HAVE PAPER TO WRITE DOWN THE CONTRACT
I'LL SIGN HERE
OH, YOU RE SO SILLY
YOU RE VERY SKILLED AT TAKING IT OFF
MR. PLAY-BOY
JE T'AIME, ELAINE
JE T'AIME

HOW ABOUT WE GO HOME TOMO-RROW?
YES.
YOU'LL BE ALL RIGHT NOW... WON'T YOU?

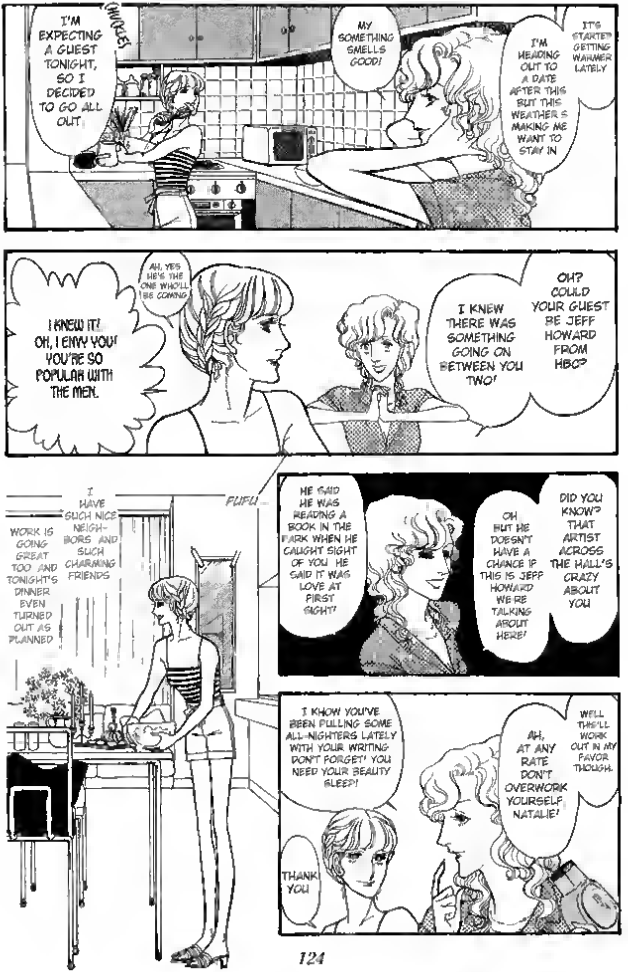
CONGRATULATIONS
WE'VE DECIDED TO MOVE IN TOGETHER.
I NEVER THOUGHT THERE'D COME A DAY WHEN WE COULD BE COMFORTABLE IN EACH OTHER'S PRESENCE LIKE THIS
I FEEL AT EASE
THE LAST TIME I SAW HIM, I COULDN'T EVEN LOOK VAUGHE IN THE FACE BUT NOW I FEEL AS IF A BURDEN HAS BEEN LIFTED OFF MY SHOULDERS
YOU'RE GLOWING BLAINE
IT'S ALMOST AS IF I'M LOOKING AT A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT PERSON
THAT OFFERED ME MORE COMFORT AND HEALING THAN ANY OTHER
WHENEVER I FELT LIKE REACHING OUT TO SOMEONE MICHELE WAS ALWAYS THERE TO TAKE MY HAND IN HIS

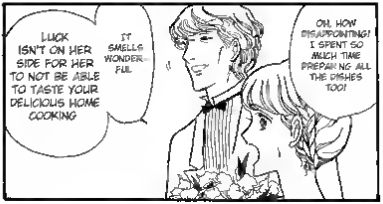
YES
HOW GOOD THEY LOOK TOGETHER, DON'T YOU AGREE?
I WILL
MAKE SURE TO MAKE THE BEST OF THIS EXPERIENCE. THERE ARE MANY WONDERFUL MUSEUMS OVER THERE
THIS WILL BE A BIG STEP FORWARD IN YOUR ART CAREER.
YOU MUST BE EXCITED ABOUT GOING TO THE U.S.
A SCHEDULE HAS BEEN PASSED AROUND, SO MAKE SURE TO READ IT OVER LATER ON
—AND PLEASE REFRAIN FROM WANDERING OFF ON YOUR OWN.

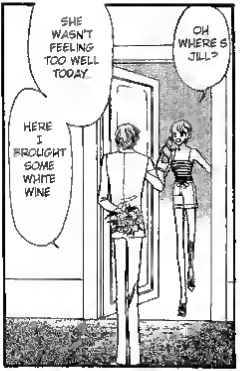
HUH, ARE YOU THAT HAPPY TO GO?
YOUR FACE IS PRACTICALLY SCRUNCHED UP WITH HAPPINESS
Chuckles
THE LAST DAY WILL BE SPENT IN NEW YORK.
WE'LL GET AN ENTIRE DAY TO SPEND AS WE LIKE
Ba-dump Ba-dump
FRANCIS!
WHEEZE WHEEZE
I'M SO GLAD I MADE IT IN TIME
THIS IS FROM MY MOTHER SHE SAID TO TELL YOU CONGRATULATIONS
WOW THANK YOU!
HASN'T ANYONE ELSE COME TO SEE YOU OFF?
IT'S ONLY GOING TO BE FOR 10 DAYS
AND YOU HAVE TO REMEMBER THIS S A STUDY TRIP
KNOCK
I DON'T LIKE HIM
HE'S SUCH A MEANIE
FELHAN'S A NICE GUY.

I'VE BEEN LOOKING FORWARD TO IT FOR WHAT FEELS LIKE FOREVER!
I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE I'LL REALLY BE ABLE TO SEE HER!
YOU LOOK EXCITED FRANCIS
YOU'RE GOING TO SEE MISS NATALIE WHILE YOU'RE IN THE U.S. AREN'T YOU?
OF COURSE!
HEY LET'S GO
WE'RE HEADING TO THE GATES NOW
COMING!
WELL MILLFINE, THANKS FOR COMING ALL THE WAY HERE TO SEE ME OFF
I'LL MAKE SURE TO GET YOU SOME THING
SMILES
I HOPE YOU HAVE A WONDERFUL TIME PLEASE SAY HI TO MISS NATALIE FOR ME

A SISTER, HUH?
SHE CAN BE A BIT SELF-CENTERED AT TIMES BUT SHE'S CUTE,
SHE'S ALMOST LIKE A LITTLE SISTER TO ME
SHE REALLY HAS EYES ONLY FOR YOU DOESN'T SHE?
I WONDER HOW IT IS FOR HER THOUGH?
OH FRANCIS
HEY NATALIE SORRY BUT MIND IF I BORROW YOUR HAIR DRYER?
MINE JUST DIED ON ME
OH SURE, MARGE

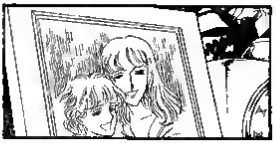

I'M EXPECTING A GUEST TONIGHT, SO I DECIDED TO GO ALL OUT!
(WHERE?)
MY SOMETHING SMELLS GOOD!
I'M HEADING OUT TO A DATE AFTER THIS BUT THIS WEATHER'S MAKING ME WANT TO STAY IN
IT'S STARTED GETTING WARMER LATELY
I KNEW IT! OH, I ENVY YOU! YOU'RE SO POPULAR WITH THE MEN.
AH, YES! HE'S THE ONE WHO'LL BE COMING!
I KNEW THERE WAS SOMETHING GOING ON BETWEEN YOU TWO!
OH? COULD YOUR GUEST BE JEFF HOWARD FROM HBC?
WORK IS GOING GREAT TOO! AND TONIGHT'S DINNER EVEN TURNED OUT AS PLANNED
I HAVE SUCH NICE NEIGH-BORS AND SUCH CHARMING FRIENDS
FUFU
HE SAID HE WAS READING A BOOK IN THE PARK WHEN HE CAUGHT SIGHT OF YOU. HE SAID IT WAS LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT!
OH, BUT HE DOESN'T HAVE A CHANCE IF THIS IS JEFF HOWARD WE'RE TALKING ABOUT HERE!
DID YOU KNOW? THAT ARTIST ACROSS THE HALL'S CRAZY ABOUT YOU
I KNOW YOU'VE BEEN PULLING SOME ALL-NIGHTERS LATELY WITH YOUR WRITING! DON'T FORGET! YOU NEED YOUR BEAUTY SLEEP!
AH, AT ANY RATE DON'T OVERWORK YOURSELF, NATALIE!
WELL, THAT'LL WORK OUT IN MY FAVOR, THOUGH.
THANK YOU!


LUCK ISN'T ON HER SIDE FOR HER TO NOT BE ABLE TO TASTE YOUR DELICIOUS HOME COOKING
IT SMELLS WONDERFUL
OH, HOW DISAPPOINTING! I SPENT SO MUCH TIME PREPARING ALL THE DISHES TOO!

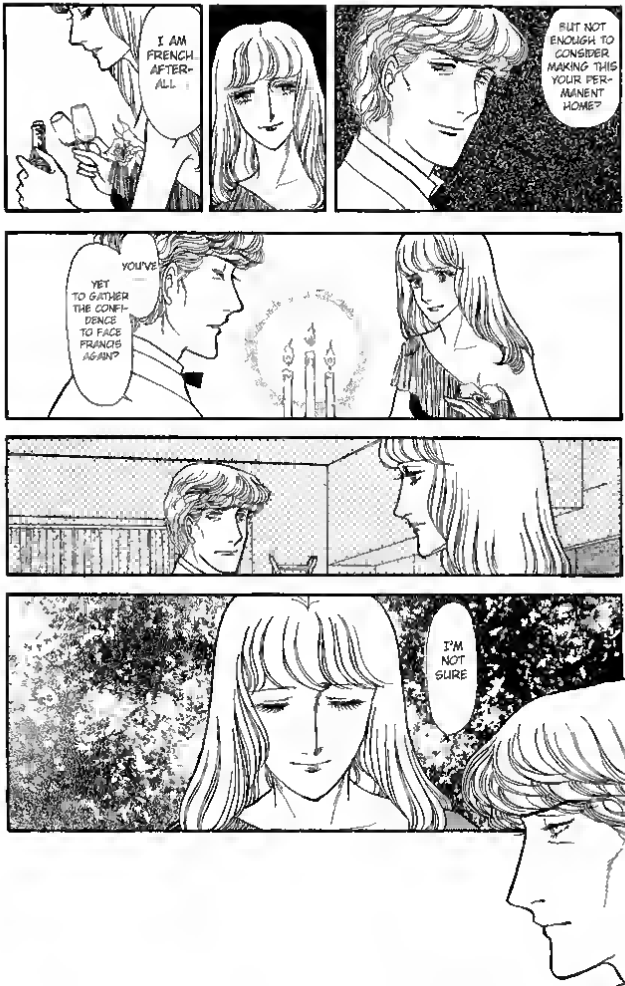

SHE WASN'T FEELING TOO WELL TODAY...
OH WHERE'S JILL?
HERE I BROUGHT SOME WHITE WINE

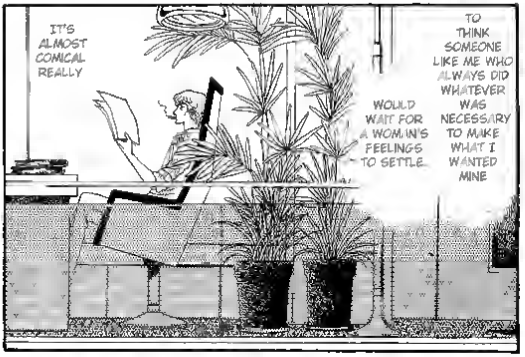
I'VE ALREADY PREPARED EVERYTHING SO ALL I NEED TO DO IS JUST GET CHANGED
HAVE A SEAT, JEFF.

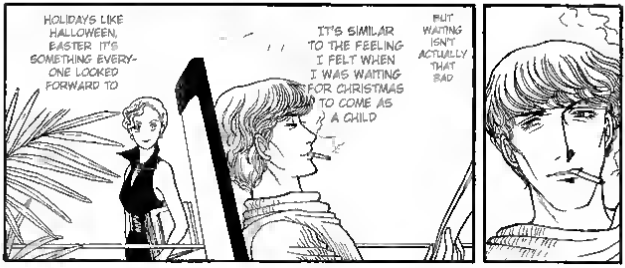
WHAT'S THE REASON FOR THE SMILE?
YOU LOOK STUNNING
VERY PLEASANT INDEED
I WAS JUST THINKING HOW IT'S BEEN NEARLY A YEAR SINCE I FIRST MET YOU
HOW'VE YOU BEEN FINDING THE U.S.?



TO THINK A BOY YET 15 IS MY RIVAL


I AM FRENCH AFTER-ALL
BUT NOT ENOUGH TO CONSIDER MAKING THIS YOUR PERMANENT HOME?
YOU'VE YET TO GATHER THE CONFIDENCE TO FACE FRANCIS AGAIN?
I'M NOT SURE


IT'S ALMOST COMICAL REALLY
WOULD WAIT FOR A WOMAN'S FEELINGS TO SETTLE...
TO THINK SOMEONE LIKE ME WHO ALWAYS DID WHATEVER WAS NECESSARY TO MAKE WHAT I WANTED MINE
SHE'S "NOT SURE" HUH?


HOLIDAYS LIKE HALLOWEEN, EASTER IT'S SOMETHING EVERY-ONE LOOKED FORWARD TO
IT'S SIMILAR TO THE FEELING I FELT WHEN I WAS WAITING FOR CHRISTMAS TO COME AS A CHILD
BUT WAITING ISN'T ACTUALLY THAT BAD

DON'T YOU NOW ?
YOU KNOW NOW WHO TO CONSIDER FOR A WAGE INCREASE NEXT
CHUCKLE
PHILIPPE
GO I CONSIDER THIS JUST AN EXTEN-TION OF MY WORK
WELL I FULLY EXPECT TONIGHT'S DATE WILL HAVE A POSITIVE EFFECT ON YOUR JOB TOMORROW
THANKS FOR GOING OUT OF YOUR WAY
WELL BOSS I'LL RESEARCH REGARDING THE PROJECT WE DISCUSSED THE OTHER DAY
I WISH YOU THE BEST OF LUCK ON YOUR DATE TONIGHT I GOT YOU TWO GREAT SEATS—

PERHAPS HE'S COME HERE TO AUDITION FOR A PART?
MY WHAT AN ADORABLE BOY
A PERSON BY THE NAME OF FRANCIS DEALBERGE HAS REQUESTED TO SEE YOU. WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO DO?
Ring Ring
SO IT'S TIME FOR THE APPEARANCE OF MY RIVAL HUH?
CLICK
LET HIM THROUGH
YES HE'S QUITE A STRIKING YOUNG MAN. WOULD YOU LIKE TO MEET WITH HIM?
Francis you say?!

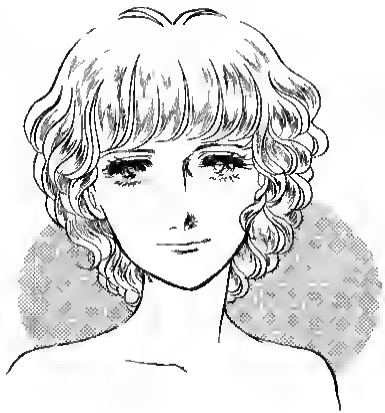
HE'S MUCH MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN HIS PHOTOGRAPHS LET ON
WELL WELL
I'VE HEARD MUCH ABOUT YOU FROM NATALIE FRANCIS
FRENCH IS FINE
How do you do, Mr Howard?
WHAT WORSE TIMING THOUGH FOR YOU TO SHOW YOUR FACE NOW
—AND OF YOUR FATHER TOO
AND SO I THOUGHT WHAT A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY TO SEE NATALIE AS WELL
I'M HERE ON A ART MUSEUM STUDY TRIP
I WANTED FOR IT TO BE A SURPRISE. BUT I GOT A BIT LOST TRYING TO FIND HER PLACE
NO, NOT YET
HAS NATALIE ALREADY
WHAT IS IT THAT YOU'RE HERE TO SEE ME FOR?

I TRIED TO FIND IT ON MY OWN BUT I STOPPED AFTER I STARTED THINKING WHAT A WASTE IT WOULD BE TO SPEND TIME SEARCHING
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
I'LL ARRANGE FOR A CAR TO DRIVE YOU THERE
OH, THE PART OF TOWN SHE LIVES IN CAN GET A BIT CONFUSING
LIM HAS NATALIE CHANGED VERY MUCH?
IT'S BEEN A YEAR SINCE I LAST SAW HER, SO I WANTED TO SEE HER AS SOON AS I COULD
I HAVE TO GO BACK THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW
NATALIE TOLD ME APPARENTLY, SHE'S VERY CUTE
A girl-friend?!
WHAT?!
Oh, that's just a misunderstanding.
IF ONLY I COULD SEE HER AS SOON AS I CAN!
WOW
IT'S ME PREPARE A CAR FOR ME
I THINK SHE'S BECOME MUCH MORE CHARMING
I HEARD YOU HAVE A GIRL-FRIEND
I WONDER IF SHE LOOKS MUCH HEALTHIER? SHE WAS ALWAYS SO PALE BEFORE
I WONDER IF HER HAIR'S GROWN SINCE THEN?

Blush...
ISN'T SHE THE IDEAL IMAGE OF A WOMAN?
TO HAVE SOMEONE SO WONDERFUL AS YOUR GUARDIAN
YOU MUST BE PROUD THOUGH,
MILLFY'S MORE LIKE A SISTER TO ME
YES
HUH
WHAT AN EXPRESSION
UM, WELL I'LL BE LEAVING NOW
THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR EVERYTHING
BOWS

FRANCIS, DO YOU HAVE ANY PLANS OF BEING OFFICIALLY ADOPTED BY NATALIE?
EVEN THOUGH SHE IS YOUR GUARDIAN YOU'RE PRACTICALLY MOTHER AND SON
ME? BECOME HER ADOPTED SON?
But ...
I'VE NEVER ONCE VIEWED HER AS MY MOTHER
OH HOW DISAPPOINTING
I WOULD HAVE BEEN DELIGHTED TO HAVE A SON LIKE YOU
What ?
What do you... mean. ?
I'M THINKING ABOUT PROPOSING TO HER.
WHAT DO YOU THINK I MEANT?

OF COURSE I'D ONLY DO SO WITH YOUR APPROVAL
What
but she never...once... mentioned ...



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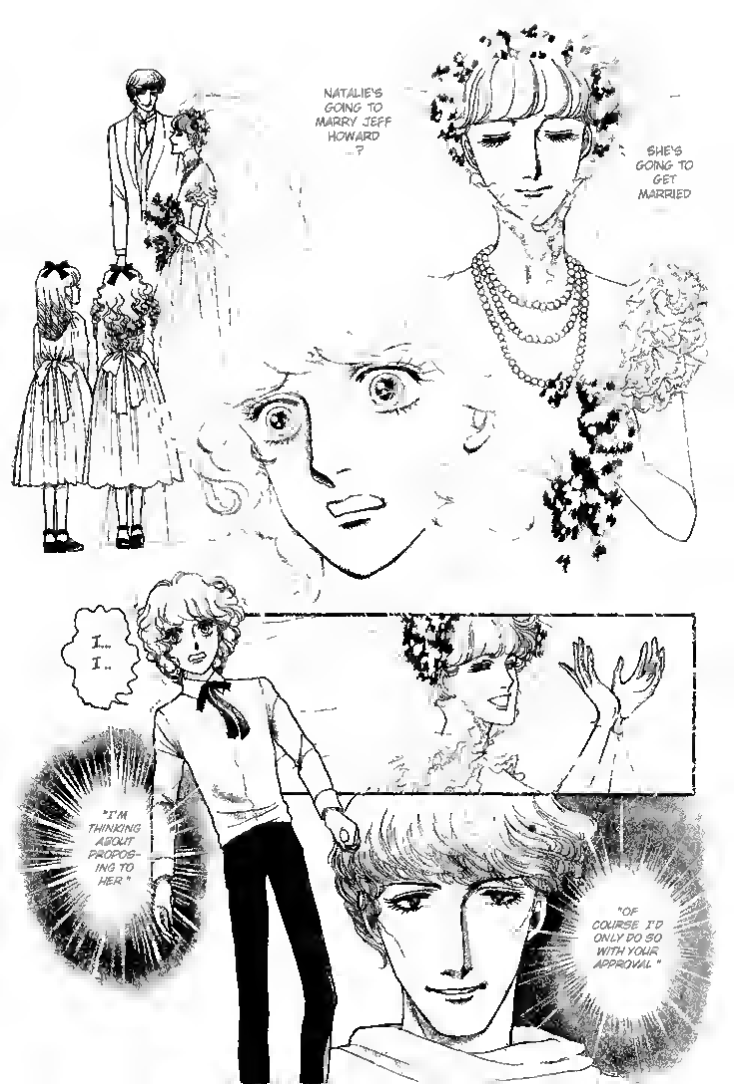

NATALIE'S GOING TO MARRY JEFF HOWARD ...?
SHE'S GOING TO GET MARRIED
I... I..
"I'M THINKING ABOUT PROPOSING TO HER."
"OF COURSE I'D ONLY DO SO WITH YOUR APPROVAL."

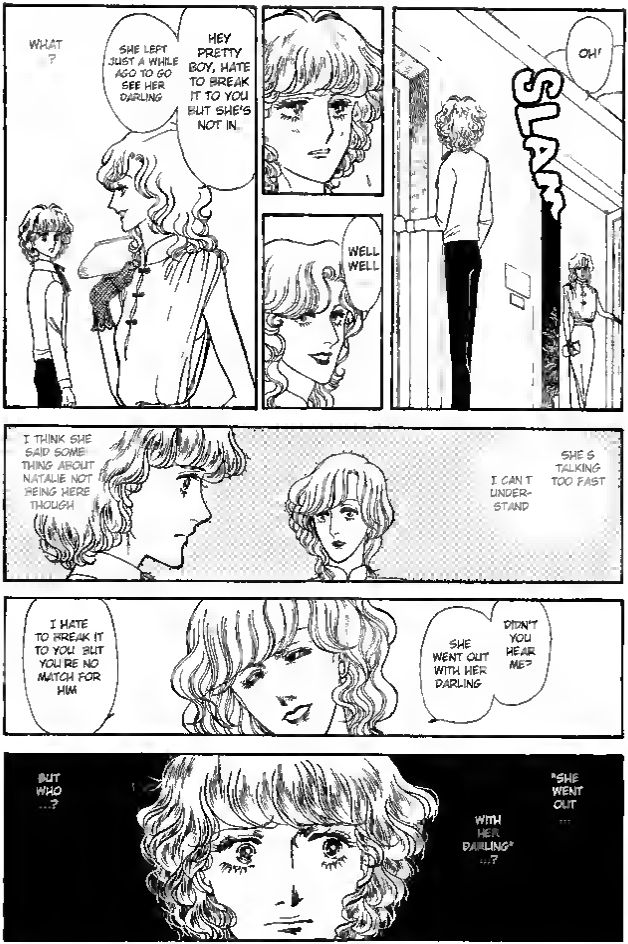
WOBBLE
I'LL SEE YOU TO THE PARKING LOT.
PAT'S
FLUCK
I-I'll be fine by myself...
DISHES

BA-DUMP
BA-DUMP
BA-DUMP
BA-DUMP
SHE'S GETTING MARRIED
SHE'S GETTING MARRIED
NATALIE'S GETTING MARRIED!
THAT'S A LIE! THAT CAN'T HAPPEN!
SHEEK SHEEK
THAT'S RIGHT THIS MUST JUST BE SOMETHING ONLY HE'S ONE-SIDEDLY CONSIDERING
SHE DIDN'T MENTION ANY OF THIS IN HER LETTERS
IT'S NOT AS IF IT'S BEEN SET IN STONE
SHEEK SHEEK

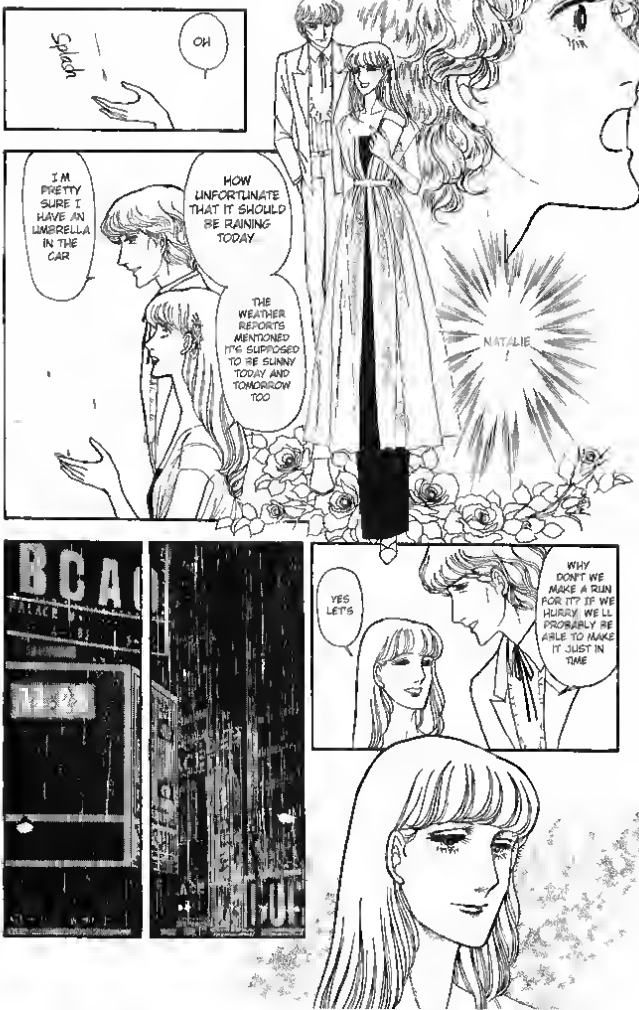
I'M GOING TO SEE NATALIE
I'M GOING TO SEE HER AND ASK HER ABOUT IT
THIS MUST JUST BE A TASTELESS JOKE THAT HE WAS PLAYING ON ME
RING RING
NATALIE?
IT'S A LITTLE EARLY, BUT WHAT DO YOU SAY WE STOP BY WILLIAMS?
YES, I HAVEN'T HAD ANY LUNCH YET IF I DON'T GET ANYTHING IN MY STOMACH I MIGHT JUST END UP EMBARRASSING MYSELF AT THE SHOW
SORRY TO CALL OUT OF THE BLUE. IF YOU COULD GET READY AS SOON AS YOU CAN I'D APPRECIATE IT
CLICK

I FEEL ASHAMED AT MY UNDER-HANDED TACTICS
FOR CHRIST'S SAKE
HONK HONK
JOHN WAYNE
THE HOBS

WHAT SHOULD I SAY TO HER ...?
WHAT NEXT ...?
I'M SCARED TO ASK ...
WHAT IF WHAT HE SAID'S ALL TRUE ...?
WHAT IF SHE TELLS ME THEY REALLY ARE GOING TO GET MARRIED?
KNOCK KNOCK


WHAT ...?
SHE LEFT JUST A WHILE AGO TO GO SEE HER DARLING
HEY PRETTY BOY, HATE TO BREAK IT TO YOU BUT SHE'S NOT IN.
WELL WELL
OH!
SLAM
I THINK SHE SAID SOMETHING ABOUT NATALIE NOT BEING HERE THOUGH
I CAN'T UNDERSTAND
SHE'S TALKING TOO FAST
I HATE TO BREAK IT TO YOU BUT YOU'RE NO MATCH FOR HIM
SHE WENT OUT WITH HER DARLING
DIDN'T YOU HEAR ME?
BUT WHO ...?
WITH HER DARLING? ...?
"SHE WENT OUT ...

OH, HOW RUDE!
I HELP YOU OUT AND THIS IS HOW YOU REPAY ME?
WELL HONEY WITH A MAN LIKE JEFF HOWARD AS YOUR RIVAL YOU MIGHT AS WELL PACK UP AND GO HOME NOW.
JEFF HOWARD!
click-click
BUT WHY ?
HE KNEW I WAS HEADING TO HER PLACE TO SEE HER
SO THEY WENT OUT...?
NATALIE, OPEN UP! IT'S ME!
NATA-LIE!
JEFF HOWARD IS NATALIE'S BOYFRIEND?!
THEY'RE GOING OUT?!
IT'S ME!
NATALIE!


Splash
OH
I'M PRETTY SURE I HAVE AN UMBRELLA IN THE CAR
HOW UNFORTUNATE THAT IT SHOULD BE RAINING TODAY
THE WEATHER REPORTS MENTIONED IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE SUNNY TODAY AND TOMORROW TOO
NATALIE
BCA
PALACE
YES LET'S
WHY DON'T WE MAKE A RUN FOR IT? IF WE HURRY, WE'LL PROBABLY BE ABLE TO MAKE IT JUST IN TIME

Scarborough

YOU CAN'T IMAGINE HOW MUCH PAIN I'M IN TO HAVE TO WAIT FOR YOU HERE FEELING LIKE THIS
HURRY BACK, NATALIE
COME AND ERASE THESE DOUBTS AWAY

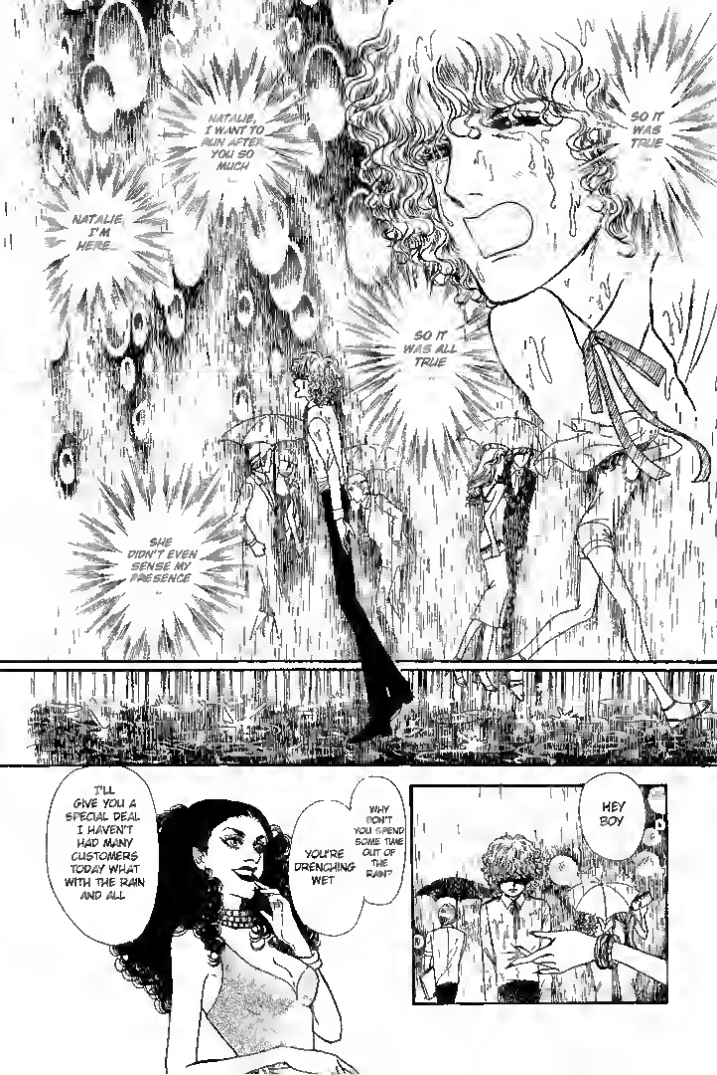
KIDS THESE DAYS HAVE NO COMMON SENSE
WHAT A FOOL HE'LL ONLY CATCH A COLD STANDING OUT THERE IN THE RAIN LIKE THAT
OH NO DON'T TELL ME HE'S STILL WAITING FOR HER?

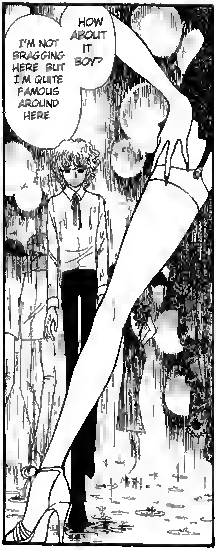
SQUEAL
NATALIE'S BACK!
IT'S STARTING TO RAIN MUCH HARDER. IT'S ALMOST LIKE A WATERFALL
SWISH
CAREFUL, YOU MIGHT GET WET
JEFF HOWARD
THANK YOU JEFF

THE JEFF HOWARD WHO TOLD ME HE'S GOING TO PROPOSE TO NATALIE
NATALIE WHO WENT OUT WITH HER LOVER
NATALIE AND JEFF HOWARD, WHO CAME BACK TOGETHER

WHAT IS IT, JEFF?
OH
IT'S NOTHING
I WAS JUST WONDERING IF I MAY HAVE THE PLEASURE OF HAVING A CUP OF TEA AT YOUR PLACE?
OF COURSE YOU CAN. YOU DID HAVE QUITE A BIT TO DRINK THOUGH. ARE YOU FEELING ALL RIGHT?

YOU'VE BEEN ACTING STRANGE ALL DAY TODAY
IS THERE SOMETHING THAT'S BOTHERING YOU?
WELL, THAT'S AN EASY QUESTION TO ANSWER.
I AM WONDERING WHAT THE BEAUTIFUL LADY STANDING NEXT TO ME FEELS TOWARDS ME
HAHAHAHA...
SLAM


NATALIE, I'M HERE...
NATALIE, I WANT TO RUN AFTER YOU SO MUCH...
SO IT WAS TRUE...
SO IT WAS ALL TRUE...
SHE DIDN'T EVEN SENSE MY PRESENCE...
HEY BOY
WHY DON'T YOU SPEND SOME TIME OUT OF THE RAIN?
YOU'RE DRENCHING WET
I'LL GIVE YOU A SPECIAL DEAL I HAVEN'T HAD MANY CUSTOMERS TODAY WHAT WITH THE RAIN AND ALL

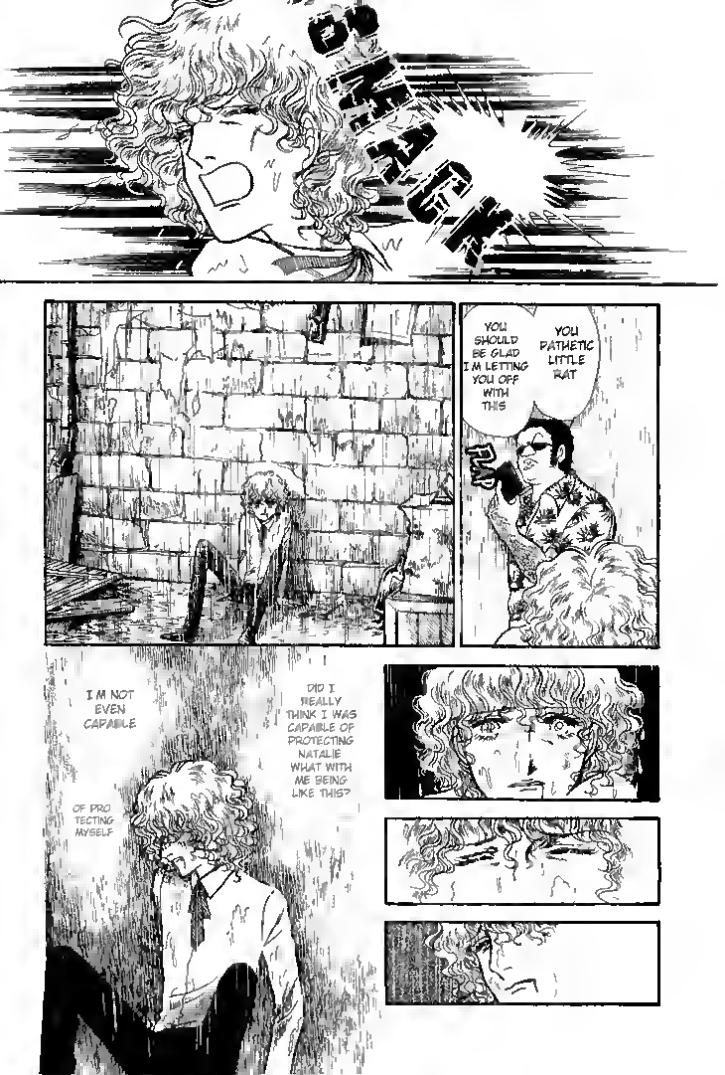

HOW ABOUT IT BOY?
I'M NOT BRAGGING HERE BUT I'M QUITE FAMOUS AROUND HERE

DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN GET AWAY WITH EMBARRASSING ME LIKE THIS?!
WHO DO YOU THINK I AM?!
WHO ARE YOU TO IGNORE ME?!

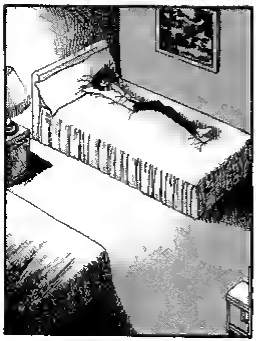
YES!
LISTEN TO THIS—
YO MARILYN, WHAT'S WITH THE NOISE? ANY PROBLEMS?

MARILYN WAS TERRIBLY HURT. SHE WAS CRYING, YA SAW
LITTLE BOY. ALL I'M SAYING IS YOU BETTER COUGH UP SOME COMPENSATION MONEY

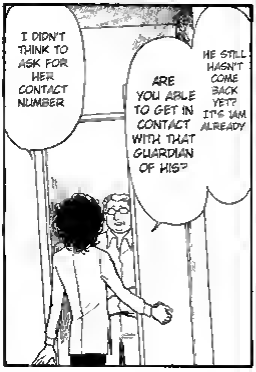
WHAT ARE YOU?! A MUTE?!
HOW ABOUT SAYING SOMETHING, HUH?!
Ishouyo
Seams


OH GOD!
YOU PATHETIC LITTLE RAT
YOU SHOULD BE GLAD I'M LETTING YOU OFF WITH THIS
DID I REALLY THINK I WAS CAPABLE OF PROTECTING NATALIE WHAT WITH ME BEING LIKE THIS?
I'M NOT EVEN CAPABLE
OF PRO TECTING MYSELF

I CAN'T MEASURE UP TO A PERSON LIKE HIM.
I CAN'T MEASURE UP
HE'S SOMEONE WHO CAN PROTECT NATALIE FOR THE REST OF HER LIFE
HE'S SOMEONE WHO'S CAPABLE OF MAKING NATALIE HAPPY
AND TO THINK IT WOULD BE THIS PAINFUL TO SEE YOU LOOK SO HAPPY
I WANTED YOU TO BE THE HAPPIEST OUT OF ALL THE PEOPLE IN THIS WORLD
NATALIE OH HOW I ALWAYS LOOKED UP TO YOU SO
IT WAS LOVE!
IT WASN'T ADMIRATION I FELT TOWARDS HER ...

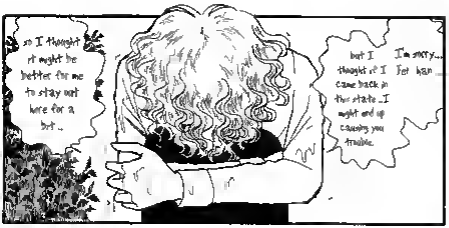


HE COULD'VE AT LEAST HAD THE DECENCY TO CALL
WHERE'S HE AT ANYWAY?

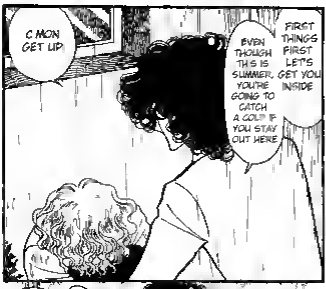

I DIDN'T THINK TO ASK FOR HER CONTACT NUMBER
ARE YOU ABLE TO GET IN CONTACT WITH THAT GUARDIAN OF HIS?
HE STILL HASN'T COME BACK YET? IT'S 1AM ALREADY

TO THINK I'D ONLY REALIZE THIS NOW

OH THIS IS TERRIBLE. IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO HIM, I'LL BE THE ONE THAT'LL BE HELD RESPONSIBLE.
I HEARD NEW YORK IS QUITE DANGEROUS, SO PERHAPS IT'S BETTER IF I JUST CALL THE POLICE?
WHY DON'T WE TRY WAITING FOR A BIT LONGER?
ONCE HE COMES BACK I'LL LET YOU KNOW AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
OKAY THEN I'LL LEAVE IT UP TO YOU. I DON'T WANT TO CREATE A FUSS ANY MORE THAN YOU DO
I JUST HOPE HE'S ALL RIGHT
THAT FOOL...!


so I thought it might be better for me to stay out here for a bit...
but I thought if I came back in this state...I might end up causing you trouble.
I'm sorry... for her...

IF YOU WERE BACK, YOU SHOULD'VE JUST COME BACK TO THE ROOM!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING FRANCIS?!


C'MON GET UP!
EVEN THOUGH THIS IS SUMMER, YOU'RE GOING TO CATCH A COLD IF YOU STAY OUT HERE.
FIRST THINGS FIRST LET'S GET YOU INSIDE

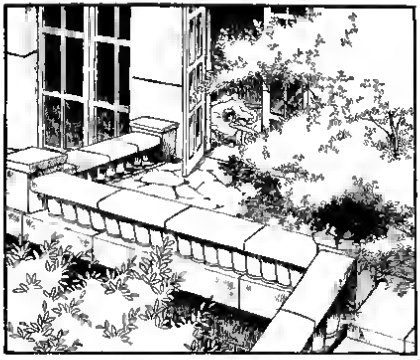
DID SHE GET HERSELF A BOYFRIEND OR SOMETHING?
WHAT

LET'S JUST GET YOU INSIDE FIRST
C'MON
WAHHHHHHH...
OOOOH.

I'm sorry
I'm sorry
I'm sorry
DON'T BE STUPID THERE'S NOTHING FOR YOU TO APOLOGIZE ABOUT
HEY NATALIE THAT RAIN YESTERDAY SEEMS ALMOST LIKE A DREAM!
ARE YOU GOING OUT SHOPPING?
YES MY FRIDGE IS LOOKING A BIT BARREN THESE DAYS SO I THOUGHT I BETTER

PARDON ?
WERE YOU ABLE TO MEET UP WITH THAT BOY FROM YESTERDAY?
YOU REALLY ARE A SMOOTH OPERATOR.
HE WAS WAITING FOR YOU OUT IN THE RAIN IT WAS SUCH A SAD SIGHT!
A CUTE BOY WITH BLONDE HAIR
HE WAS AROUND 14-15
I WONDER WHO IT COULD HAVE BEEN
PERHAPS HE S A FAN OF YOURS? SINCE AFTERALL, IT SEEMS A LOT OF YOUR FANS ARE STUDENTS
FRANCIS IS RIGHT AROUND THAT AGE
A 14 15 YEAR OLD BOY WITH BLONDE HAIR
I'M SURE HE S SPENDING HIS TIME WITH MILLFY
HE MUST BE SWIMMING EVERYDAY
SINCE HE LIVES RIGHT NEAR THE OCEAN AND WITH IT BEING SUMMER AND ALL
OH MARGE
IF YOU EVER FIND YOURSELF WITH MORE THAN YOU CAN HANDLE YOU KNOW YOU CAN ALWAYS SEND THEM MY WAY
WELL I'LL LET YOU OFF
LITTERING $25 FINE

I BETTER DO MY FINAL REVISIONS TODAY
AND TAKE IT TO THE PUBLISHING FIRM TOMORROW
AFTER THAT, I'LL TAKE A SHORT VACATION ...
AND I'LL THINK UP NEW IDEAS FOR MY NEXT BOOK
A CITY MADE UP OF CONCRETE BUILDING BLOCKS
A CHILD'S TOYBOX OF A TOWN FILLED WITH PEOPLE FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE
I WONDER IF THE WINDS FROM FRANCE
MAKE THEIR WAY HERE?
AND YET HERE I AM, STILL ABLE TO LIVE OUT MY LIFE LIKE THIS
FRANCIS' SMILE IS NOWHERE TO BE FOUND HERE



FRANCIS,

I WONDER IF MY FEELINGS WILL CROSS THE OCEAN TO REACH YOU?

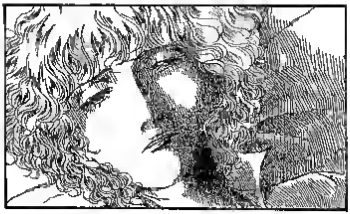
I CAME BACK FROM THE U S ON THE BRINK OF PNEUMONIA

I SPENT TWO WEEKS IN BED

IN MY DREAMS THOUGH I WOULD SEE NATALIE SMILING

AND SEEING HER LOOK SO HAPPY CRYSTALLIZED MY PAIN

SHE'S NO LONGER THE NATALIE SHE USED TO BE



SHE MIGHT NOT COME BACK HERE ANYMORE

THE DAYS PASSED WITHOUT ME BEING ABLE TO ACCEPT THE REALITY OF THE SITUATION, NOR ME BEING ABLE TO WISH THEM HAPPINESS

I KNEW IT WAS GOING TO COME OUT IN THE OPEN EVENTUALLY, SO I DECIDED TO NOT TOUCH UPON IT UNTIL THEN

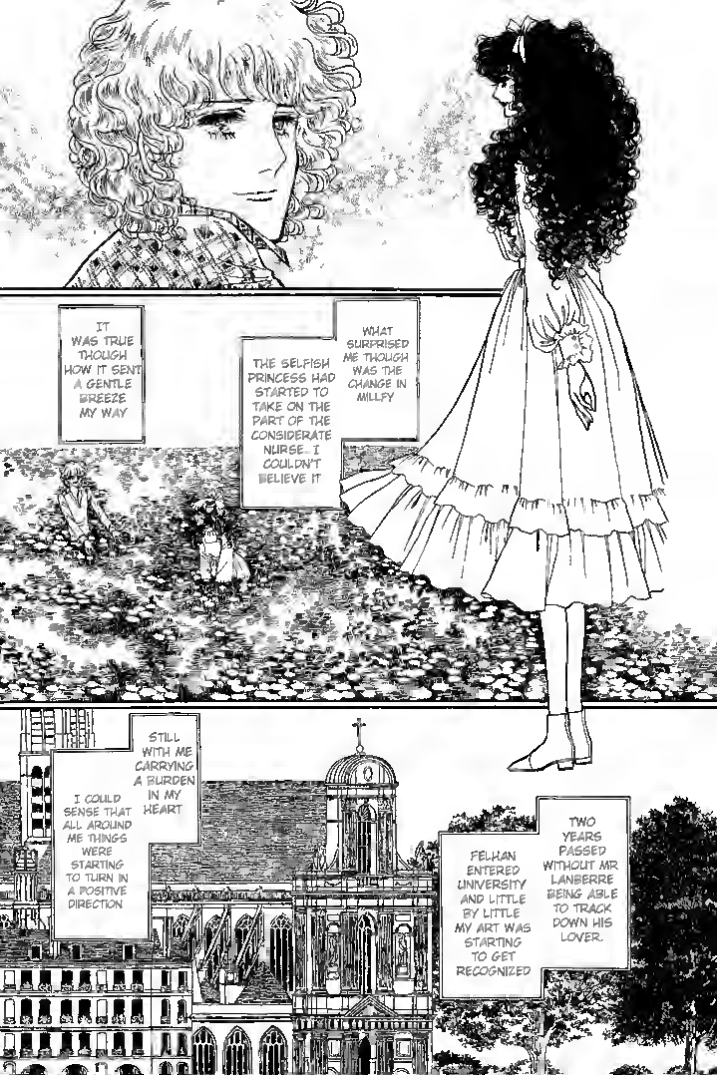
I DIDN'T TELL ANYONE ABOUT WHAT I HAD SEEN

WAS EVEN WRITTEN UP IN A MAGAZINE HERE IN FRANCE AND IT ONLY MADE ME REALIZE ALL THE MORE HOW FAR AWAY OF A PERSON SHE HAD BECOME

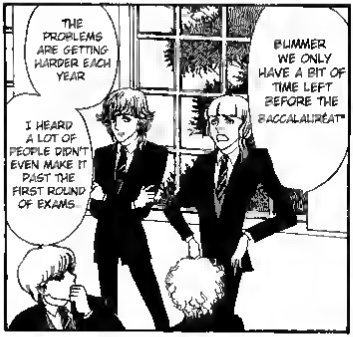
A SCANDALOUS ARTICLE REGARDING NATALIE AND JEFF HOWARD'S RELATIONSHIP

AND WHEN I HAD REALIZED IT IT WAS ONLY FILLED WITH SUPERFICIAL NEWS OF OUR DAILY LIVES

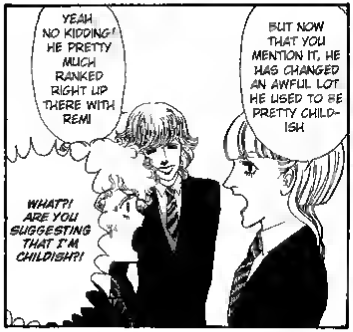
OUR LETTERS BECAME DISTANCED


IT WAS TRUE THOUGH HOW IT SENT A GENTLE BREEZE MY WAY
THE SELFISH PRINCESS HAD STARTED TO TAKE ON THE PART OF THE CONSIDERATE NURSE.. I COULDN'T BELIEVE IT
WHAT SURPRISED ME THOUGH WAS THE CHANGE IN MILLFY
I COULD SENSE THAT ALL AROUND ME THINGS WERE STARTING TO TURN IN A POSITIVE DIRECTION
STILL WITH ME CARRYING A BURDEN IN MY HEART
FELHAN ENTERED UNIVERSITY AND LITTLE BY LITTLE MY ART WAS STARTING TO GET RECOGNIZED
TWO YEARS PASSED WITHOUT MR LANBERRE BEING ABLE TO TRACK DOWN HIS LOVER.

*BACCALAURÉAT=UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE EXAMS IN FRANCE


THE PROBLEMS ARE GETTING HARDER EACH YEAR
I HEARD A LOT OF PEOPLE DIDN'T EVEN MAKE IT PAST THE FIRST ROUND OF EXAMS
BUMMER WE ONLY HAVE A BIT OF TIME LEFT BEFORE THE BACCALAURÉAT*

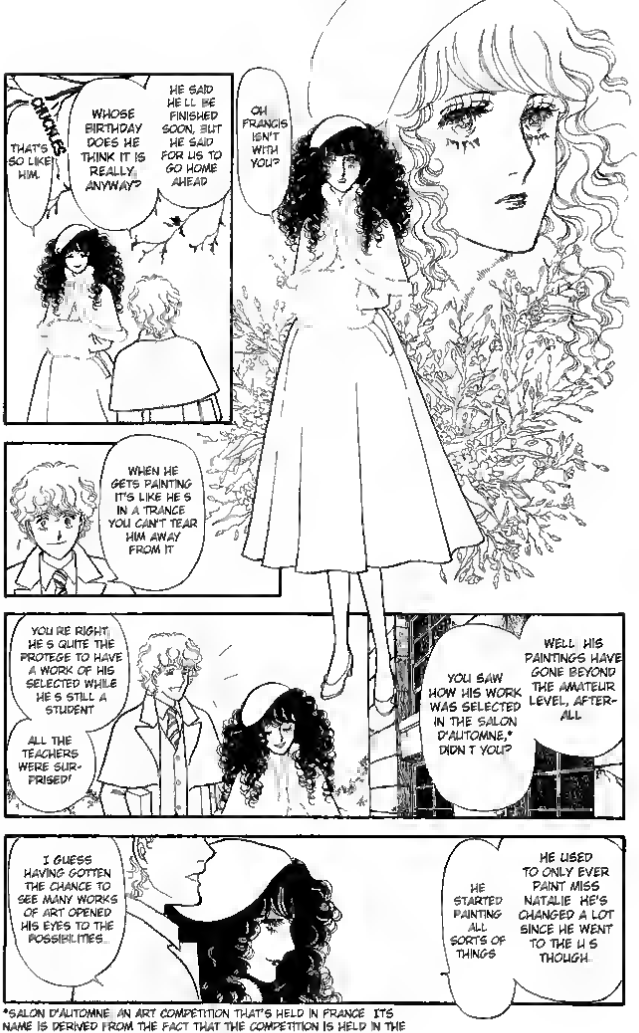
FRANCIS HAS GOT IT GREAT! HE'S RANKED FIRST AGAIN.
I CAN'T EVEN BELIEVE HE'S THE SAME SPECIES AS US!
I'M DREADING THE INTERVIEW! I'LL PROBABLY BE TOO NERVOUS TO SPEAK!


YEAH, NO KIDDING! HE PRETTY MUCH RANKED RIGHT UP THERE WITH REMI
BUT NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, HE HAS CHANGED AN AWFUL LOT HE USED TO BE PRETTY CHILDISH
WHAT?! ARE YOU SUGGESTING THAT I'M CHILDISH?!

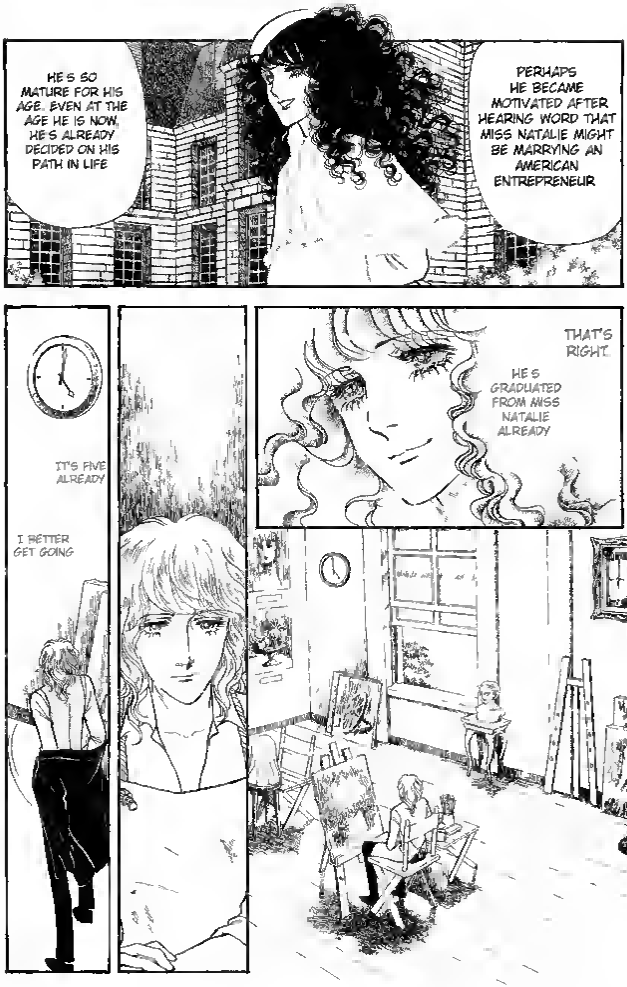
Splash
HE'S STILL IN A STATE OF DENIAL
HA HA
THEY DO SAY IGNORANCE IS BLISS!
HEHEH
OH JUST SHUT UP, DEAR!
HEY... IT'S STARTED TO RAIN
WOULD YOU MIND CLOSING THE CURTAINS?
I'M NOT FOND OF RAIN

Volume 3 Chapter 23

1978 — EARLY SPRING
WELL SURE I DON'T MIND BUT —
AGAIN ?
WOULD YOU MIND — GIVING THIS TO HER?
MILLY'S COME TO PICK YOU UP, RIGHT?
WAIT UP, REMI!
YO, REMI DON'T FORGET TO BRING THE LIST OF PROBLEMS FROM PAST EXAMS ON MONDAY!
OH, YOU MEAN THE BACCALAURÉAT ONES?
I HATE TO SAY THIS, BUT IT'LL DO YOU NO GOOD. SHE ONLY HAS EYES FOR FRANCIS.
YEAH, YOU HEAR THAT? SHE WON'T GIVE YOU THE TIME OF DAY.
Well just because she shot you down doesn't mean that it'll be the same for me!


CHUCKLE
THAT'S SO LIKE HIM.
WHOSE BIRTHDAY DOES HE THINK IT IS REALLY, ANYWAY?
HE SAID HE'LL BE FINISHED SOON, BUT HE SAID FOR US TO GO HOME AHEAD
OH, FRANCIS ISN'T WITH YOU?
WHEN HE GETS PAINTING IT'S LIKE HE'S IN A TRANCE YOU CAN'T TEAR HIM AWAY FROM IT
YOU'RE RIGHT. HE'S QUITE THE PROTEGE TO HAVE A WORK OF HIS SELECTED WHILE HE'S STILL A STUDENT
ALL THE TEACHERS WERE SURPRISED!
YOU SAW HOW HIS WORK WAS SELECTED IN THE SALON D'AUTOMNE,* DIDN'T YOU?
WELL, HIS PAINTINGS HAVE GONE BEYOND THE AMATEUR LEVEL, AFTER-ALL
I GUESS HAVING GOTTEN THE CHANCE TO SEE MANY WORKS OF ART OPENED HIS EYES TO THE POSSIBILITIES...
HE STARTED PAINTING ALL SORTS OF THINGS
HE USED TO ONLY EVER PAINT MISS NATALIE. HE'S CHANGED A LOT SINCE HE WENT TO THE U.S. THOUGH...

*SALON D'AUTOMNE: AN ART COMPETITION THAT'S HELD IN FRANCE. ITS NAME IS DERIVED FROM THE FACT THAT THE COMPETITION IS HELD IN THE FALL


HE'S SO MATURE FOR HIS AGE. EVEN AT THE AGE HE IS NOW, HE'S ALREADY DECIDED ON HIS PATH IN LIFE
PERHAPS HE BECAME MOTIVATED AFTER HEARING WORD THAT MISS NATALIE MIGHT BE MARRYING AN AMERICAN ENTREPRENEUR
THAT'S RIGHT.
HE'S GRADUATED FROM MISS NATALIE ALREADY
IT'S FIVE ALREADY
I BETTER GET GOING

SLAM
IT'S BEEN FOUR AND A HALF YEARS SINCE
THE LADIES ARE STARTING TO GET IMPATIENT FRANCIS
WE CAN'T START THE PARTY WITHOUT THE STAR OF THE PARTY
HONK
HONK

IROOOM
YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE THOUGH YOU WON'T HEAR A PEEP OUT OF ME
OH YOU KNOW ALREADY?
MY UNCLE'S BEEN WRACKING HIS HEAD FOR OVER A MONTH THINKING OF WHAT TO GET YOU
YOU WON'T BELIEVE WHAT HE FOUND
YES
SO IT'S BEEN FOUR AND A HALF YEARS ALREADY HUH?
WELL, AT ANY RATE SHE'S LONG OVERDUE FOR A VISIT
BUT I WONDER IF SHE REALLY IS PLANNING ON MARRYING THAT GUY SHE'S RUMOURED TO BE SEEING?
I WONDER WHAT SHE'S BEEN DOING? I'VE HEARD WORD ABOUT HOW SHE'S WORKING HARD

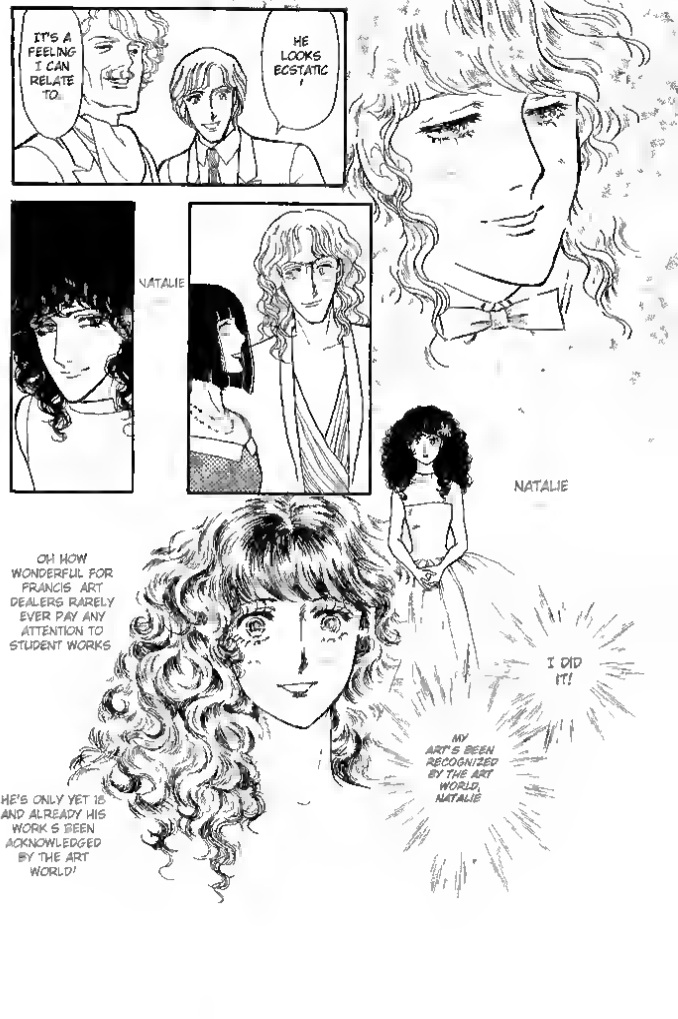
ONCE SHE MARRIES, THERE'LL BE NOTHING TO KEEP US TIED TOGETHER...
MARRIAGE
I STILL REMEMBER CLEARLY
HOW HAPPY SHE LOOKED
AND HOW JEFF HOWARD LOOKED AT ME
EVEN THOUGH IT'S BEEN FOUR AND A HALF YEARS I STILL REMEMBER IT AS IF IT HAD HAPPENED JUST YESTERDAY
Ishouju Scene

I PICKED UP A PAINT BRUSH AND THREW MYSELF INTO ART TO TRY TO FORGET,
I EVEN WENT SO FAR AS TO NOT EVEN SAY HER NAME OUT LOUD THIS WAS HOW I SPENT THESE LAST FOUR AND A HALF YEARS
EVEN SO
THE LAST OF THE STRAW HASN'T BEEN DRAWN
BECAUSE I'VE YET TO ASK HER ABOUT IT
HE'S CHANGED
HE ISN'T AS OPEN WITH HIS FEELINGS AS HE USED TO BE
VROOOOM
WHY THOUGH? WHEN IT'S SO CLEAR WHAT THE ANSWER IS
AND YET A PART OF ME IS STILL HOPING

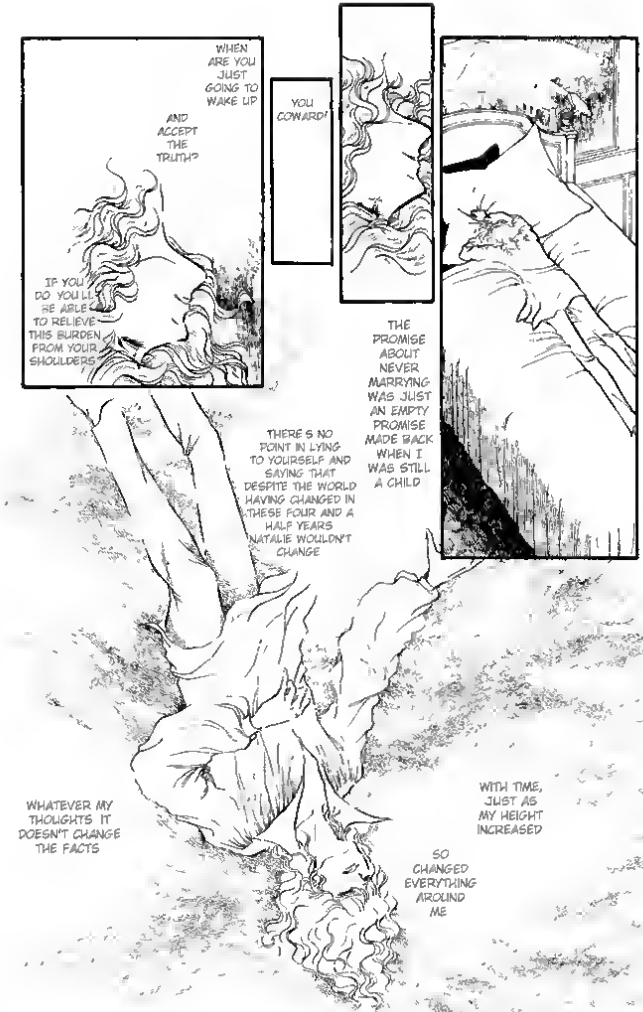
HAVE THESE FOUR AND A HALF YEARS TURN YOU INTO A MAN?
SO IT'S FINALLY MY TURN IS IT?
I HAVE QUITE A BIT OF CONFI-DENCE IN MY GIFT TO YOU!
CAN YOU GUESS WHAT IT COULD BE?
Oh, you probably all know already!
WHY DON'T YOU STOP TEASING HIM, AND GIVE IT TO HIM ALREADY VAUGHE?
THAT'S RIGHT. YOU'VE HAD YOUR FUN
WELL I GUESS I'M OUT-NUMBERED
COUGH
WELL THEN MAY I PRESENT TO YOU THIS ENVELOPE

WOW
YOUR ART HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A CHEQUE!
THAT'S RIGHT, FRANCIS YOUR PIECE CHOSEN IN THE COMPETITION HAS BEEN SOLD
WHAT ?!
WAY TO GO!
Ah, what...?
CONGRATULATIONS FRANCIS! HOW AMAZING!
IF THERE ARE ANY ART SUPPLIES YOU NEED, ALL YOU NEED TO DO IS SAY THE WORD DO YOU HEAR ME?
THAT'S RIGHT, AN ART DEALER FELL IN LOVE WITH THE PIECE
HE SAID HE'D BE INTERESTED IN BUYING FUTURE PIECES OF YOURS AS WELL
R-really...?
Did someone really purchase my work?

HERE, THIS IS YOURS
THIS IS YOUR FIRST PAYMENT AS AN ARTIST.
SOMEONE BOUGHT MY WORK
MY ART HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED BY SOCIETY
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
HUH. LOOKS LIKE YOU BEAT ME TO IT.
FELHAN
THIS PIECE OF PAPER RIGHT HERE
I've been able to take a step forward.
WILL SERVE AS A GUIDE-POST FOR MY FUTURE ENDEAVORS!


IT'S A FEELING I CAN RELATE TO.
HE LOOKS ECSTATIC!
NATALIE
NATALIE
OH HOW WONDERFUL FOR FRANCIS ART DEALERS RARELY EVER PAY ANY ATTENTION TO STUDENT WORKS
I DID IT!
MY ART'S BEEN RECOGNIZED BY THE ART WORLD, NATALIE
HE'S ONLY YET 18 AND ALREADY HIS WORK S BEEN ACKNOWLEDGED BY THE ART WORLD!

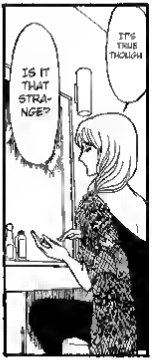
YOU SHOULD CALL HER AS SOON AS YOU CAN I'M SURE SHE'D BE SO HAPPY FOR YOU
YOU KNOW HOW TO MAKE AN INTERNATIONAL CALL, DON'T YOU?
ISN'T THERE SOMEONE ELSE YOU SHOULD LET KNOW THE GOOD NEWS?
No... that's okay...
I'll tell her after she comes back
WHAT IS IT? ISN'T SHE THE PERSON YOU WANT TO TELL THIS TO MOST OF ALL?
Ah...
IT'S BETTER TO SAVE SURPRISES
IF I TELL HER NOW, I WON'T BE ABLE TO SEE HER SURPRISED FACE
IF I PHONE HER RIGHT NOW I WON'T BE ABLE TO AVOID ASKING HER
NO I DON'T WANT TO HAVE TO HEAR JEFF HOWARD'S NAME FROM NATALIE'S LIPS
I'M SCARED THOUGH TO HEAR THE TRUTH


WHEN ARE YOU JUST GOING TO WAKE UP AND ACCEPT THE TRUTH?
IF YOU DO YOU'LL BE ABLE TO RELIEVE THIS BURDEN FROM YOUR SHOULDERS
YOU COWARD!
THE PROMISE ABOUT NEVER MARRYING WAS JUST AN EMPTY PROMISE MADE BACK WHEN I WAS STILL A CHILD
THERE'S NO POINT IN LYING TO YOURSELF AND SAYING THAT DESPITE THE WORLD HAVING CHANGED IN THESE FOUR AND A HALF YEARS NATALIE WOULDN'T CHANGE
WHATEVER MY THOUGHTS IT DOESN'T CHANGE THE FACTS
WITH TIME, JUST AS MY HEIGHT INCREASED
SO CHANGED EVERYTHING AROUND ME

WAKE UP AND SMELL THE COFFEE! THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO TO CHANGE THE TRUTH OF THE SITUATION

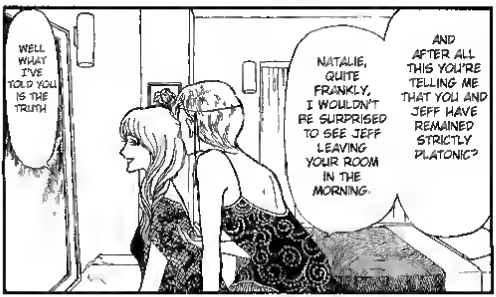
YOU SHOULD JUST GIVE UP ON THE PRESUMPTUOUS NOTION OF LIVING YOUR LIFE FOR HER!

IT'S BEEN FOUR AND A HALF YEARS!
"Strange"
Of course it's strange! Oh Natalie, even someone like me wouldn't believe such a ridiculous lie like that!

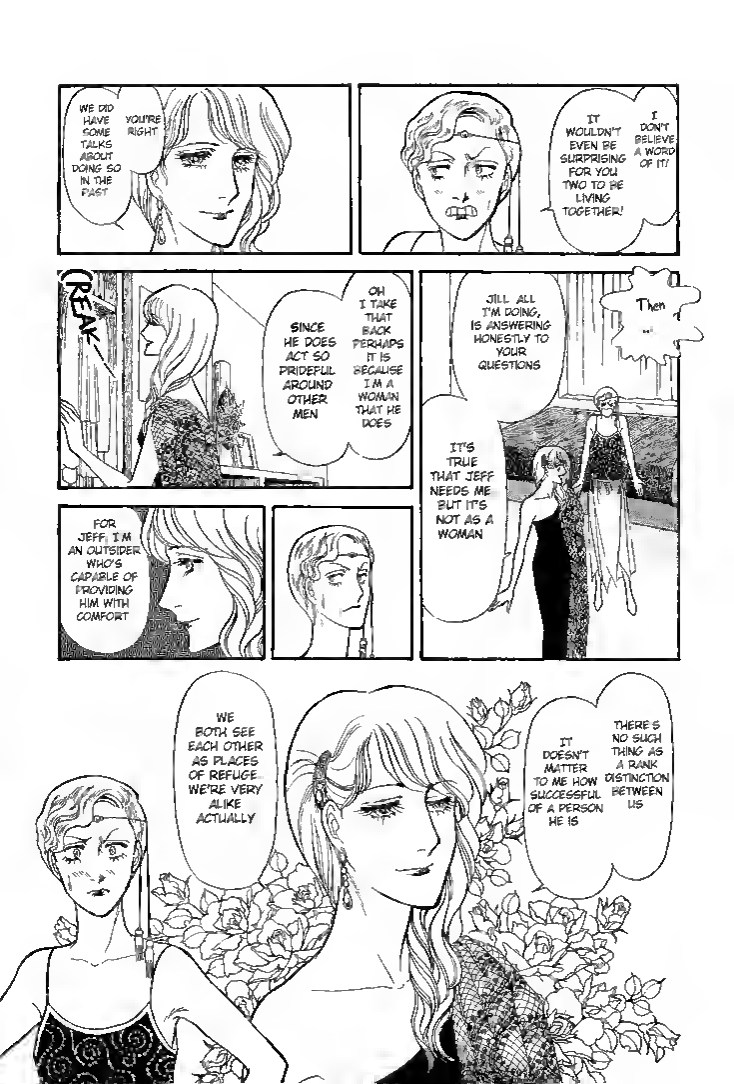

IS IT THAT STRANGE?
IT'S TRUE THOUGH

You're... not to be kidding me...

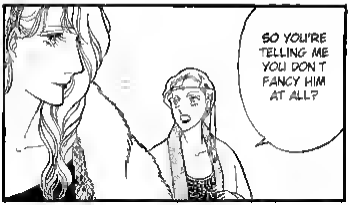
AND NOT TO MENTION THE TABLOIDS HAVE WRITTEN UP QUITE A STORM ABOUT US...
NOT ONLY THAT, YOU TWO ONLY EVER ATTEND PARTIES TOGETHER!
DURING THAT TIME YOU'VE BEEN GOING OUT WITH JEFF AT LEAST ONCE EVERY WEEK


WELL WHAT I'VE TOLD YOU IS THE TRUTH
NATALIE, QUITE FRANKLY, I WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED TO SEE JEFF LEAVING YOUR ROOM IN THE MORNING.
AND AFTER ALL THIS YOU'RE TELLING ME THAT YOU AND JEFF HAVE REMAINED STRICTLY PLATONIC?

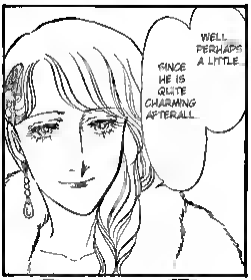
THAT'S RIGHT!


WE DID HAVE SOME TALKS ABOUT DOING SO IN THE PAST
YOU'RE RIGHT
I DON'T BELIEVE A WORD OF IT!
IT WOULDN'T EVEN BE SURPRISING FOR YOU TWO TO BE LIVING TOGETHER!
OH I TAKE THAT BACK PERHAPS IT IS BECAUSE I'M A WOMAN THAT HE DOES
SINCE HE DOES ACT SO PRIDEFUL AROUND OTHER MEN
CREAK
Then ...
JILL ALL I'M DOING, IS ANSWERING HONESTLY TO YOUR QUESTIONS
IT'S TRUE THAT JEFF NEEDS ME BUT IT'S NOT AS A WOMAN
FOR JEFF, I'M AN OUTSIDER WHO'S CAPABLE OF PROVIDING HIM WITH COMFORT
WE BOTH SEE EACH OTHER AS PLACES OF REFUGE. WE'RE VERY ALIKE ACTUALLY
IT DOESN'T MATTER TO ME HOW SUCCESSFUL OF A PERSON HE IS
THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A RANK DISTINCTION BETWEEN US

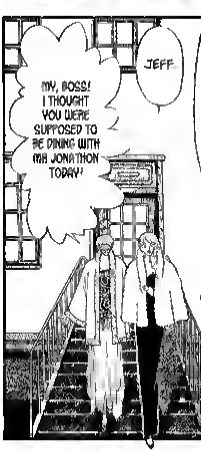
I HATE TO BREAK IT TO YOU, BUT I'M NOT AT ALL FOND OF THAT CURRENT WIFE OF HIS.
WELL, AT ANY RATE IF YOU TWO EVER DO END UP GETTING MARRIED YOU BETTER HELP ME OUT!
I HATE THAT SNOTTY AIR SHE PUTS UP JUST BECAUSE SHE'S THE WIFE OF THE WEALTHY


SO YOU'RE TELLING ME YOU DON'T FANCY HIM AT ALL?

I DON'T REALLY GET IT


WELL, PERHAPS A LITTLE. SINCE HE IS QUITE CHARMING AFTERALL

I THOUGHT I'D BE DOING YOU A FAVOR BY COMING TO ESCORT YOU
THERE'S BEEN AN AIRPLANE ACCIDENT SO HE SAID HE'LL BE ARRIVING HERE TOMORROW


JEFF.
MY, BOSS! I THOUGHT YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO BE DINING WITH MR JONATHON TODAY!

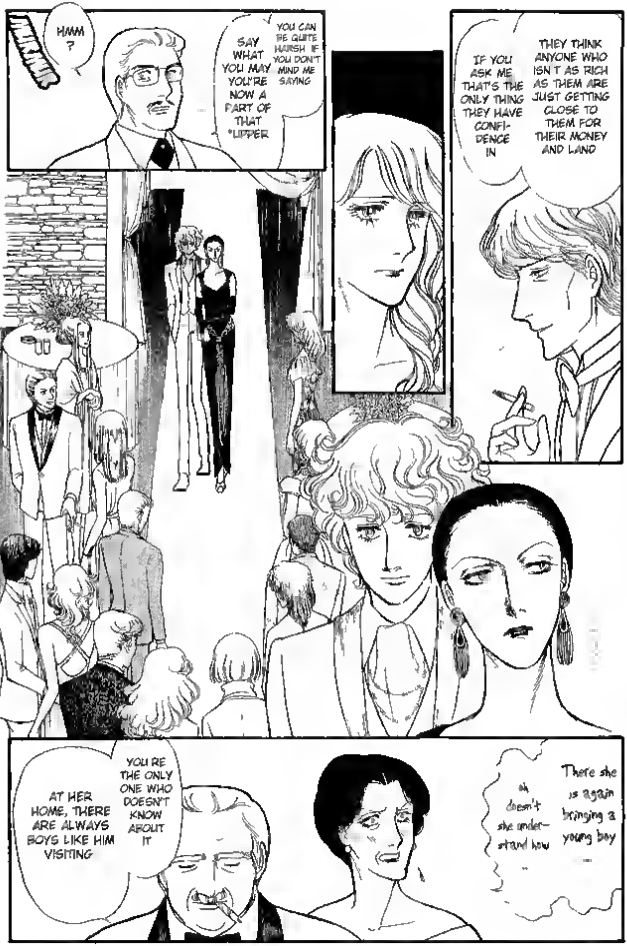
IT TOOK YOU BOTH LONG ENOUGH THE RECEPTION'S ALREADY STARTED.

A FAVOR, YOU SAY?
HUH

PHILIP!
I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE COMING!
HE'S HER NEW BOYFRIEND. HE'S A PRODUCER.
WELL, DOESN'T SHE HAVE QUITE THE ACTIVE LIFE.
JUST FROM WHOM I KNOW OF. SHE'S DATED SIX DIFFERENT MEN
FOR HER SHORTEST RELATIONSHIP, IT ONLY LASTED A WEEK.
I GUESS SHE'S "LIVING IT UP" FOR YOUR SAKE TOO
HAHAHA
HEY JEFF, AREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO BE WORKING?
WELL... THAT WAS THE PLAN

I ENVY YOU TO BE ABLE TO MONOPOLIZE SUCH A STUNNING AND TALENTED WOMAN
NATALIE, WHAT IS IT ABOUT THIS LIVE-TO-WORK CUT-THROAT BUSINESS MAN THAT YOU FIND SO CHARMING?
OH PERHAPS HIS CHILDISH NATURE?
JEFF'S YOUNG
IT'S NOT SURPRISING HE'D GET HIMSELF A WOMAN WHEN THEY'VE BEEN LIVING APART FOR OVER SEVEN YEARS
LET'S LEAVE THESE MATTERS TO OUR DAUGHTER, SHE IS THE ONE WHO SHOULD HANDLE THIS MATTER AS NOW SHE IS THE WIFE
EVEN IF THEY ARE ESTRANGED, I CAN'T HELP BUT FEEL SORRY FOR JERARDIE!
DID YOU HEAR ABOUT HOW HE LET THAT FRENCH WOMAN SIT IN THE SEAT RESERVED FOR HIS WIFE?
HE MARRIED FOR OUR FORTUNES AND NOW THAT HE'S SUCCESSFUL, LOOK HOW HE'S ACTING!
HEHEHE
THAT'S RICH!
JEFF, YOU'VE CAUGHT QUITE THE CATCH, IF I DO SAY SO MYSELF!
DAMNIT!
JUST LEAVE HIM BE
HAS HE NO SHAME?

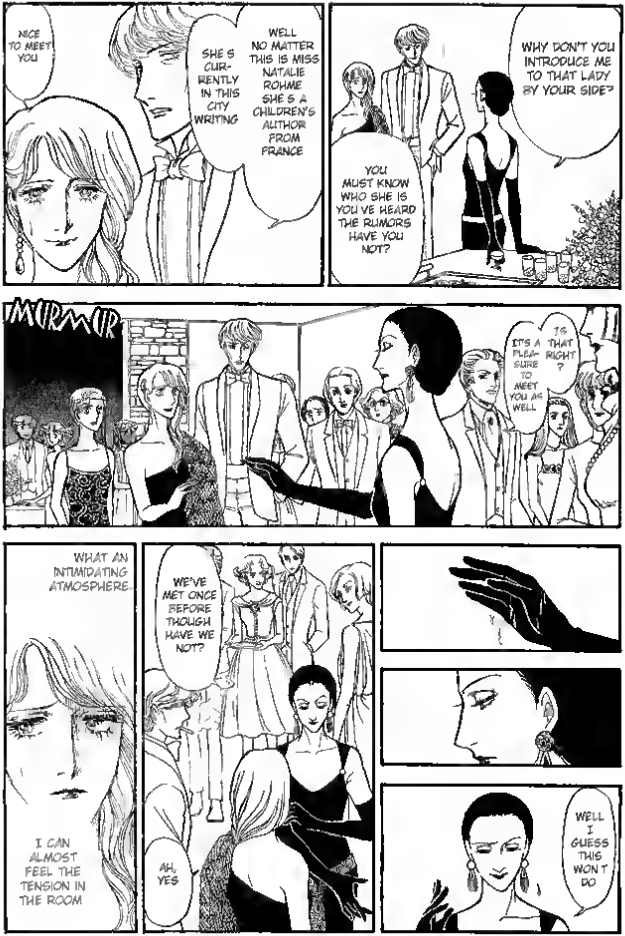
I CAN'T IMAGINE WHY SHE STILL HASN'T BROUGHT UP THE TOPIC OF A DIVORCE YET!
HE'S ALWAYS WORKING THAT HE NEVER COMES HOME AND NOT ONLY THAT BUT HE HAS NOT AN OUNCE OF MANNERS!
WELL I DON'T DENY THAT BUT I WONDER WHAT IT WAS ABOUT JEFF THAT MADE HER MARRY HIM!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT
FUNK
ARE YOU SURE YOU DON'T NEED TO GREET THEM?
YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER-IN-LAW ARE HERE
I'VE NEVER GOTTEN ALONG WITH THOSE WHO HAVE UPPER CLASS BLOOD RUNNING THROUGH THEIR VEINS
SO THERE'S NO POINT IN ME GOING OVER THERE AND RUINING THE MOOD OF THE PARTY
I KNOW THEY DON'T THINK MUCH OF ME


HMM ?
SAY WHAT YOU MAY YOU'RE NOW A PART OF THAT "LIPPER
YOU CAN BE QUITE HAUGHTY IF YOU DON'T MIND ME SAYING
IF YOU ASK ME, THAT'S THE ONLY THING THEY HAVE CONFIDENCE IN
THEY THINK ANYONE WHO ISN'T AS RICH AS THEM ARE JUST GETTING CLOSE TO THEM FOR THEIR MONEY AND LAND
AT HER HOME, THERE ARE ALWAYS BOYS LIKE HIM VISITING
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO DOESN'T KNOW ABOUT IT
oh doesn't she understand how
There she is again bringing a young boy

LOOKS LIKE IT'S A STAND-OFF
BETWEEN THE ESTRANGED COUPLE AND THEIR LOVERS
NOT ONLY THAT, BUT HER PARENTS ARE HERE AS WELL
JEFF, LET'S LEAVE
WHY ?
I'M IN NO MOOD TO BE IN THE SCRUTINY OF THOSE ATTENDING.
I DON'T WANT TO DO ANYTHING THAT MIGHT SUGGEST WE'RE RUNNING AWAY.
I HAVE NOTHING TO FEEL GUILTY OVER.
AS I TOLD YOU BEFORE SHE'S A WIFE ONLY IN NAME
MY RELATIONSHIP WITH YOU IS NOTHING TO BE ASHAMED OF

VERY WELL
YOU'RE RIGHT
IT'S ALMOST STRANGE YOU HAVEN'T BUMPED INTO EACH OTHER YET!
SEEING AS HOW YOU'VE BEEN ATTENDING VARIOUS PARTIES LIKE THESE I KNEW THERE WAS GOING TO COME A TIME LIKE THIS
THERE'S NOTHING FOR YOU TO WORRY ABOUT
NATALIE
I'm leaving.
If we stay, it'll be as if we're showing the Stewart family's shame to the entire world!
But your husband sure does look scary!
Oh, but he brought someone else with him too.
GET ME A GLASS OF CHAMPAGNE WILL YOU?
Is that why everyone's been staring at me ever since we came here...?
M-Madame, that's your husband over there, isn't he?
DON'T YOU WORRY
HE HAS NO SAY IN MY LIFE

LONG TIME NO SEE, JEFF
HAHAHA
HAHA
YOU'RE RIGHT IT'S BEEN A WHILE
I ALMOST FORGOT WHAT YOU LOOKED LIKE
TENSE

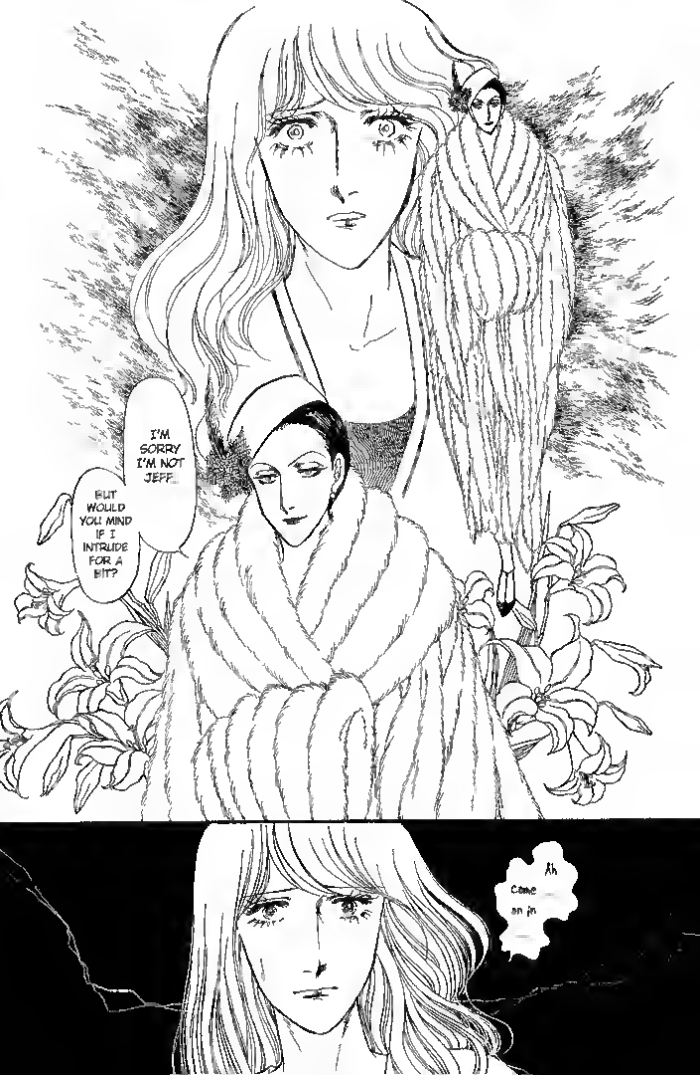

NICE TO MEET YOU
WELL NO MATTER THIS IS MISS NATALIE ROHME SHE'S A CHILDREN'S AUTHOR FROM FRANCE
SHE'S CURRENTLY IN THIS CITY WRITING
WHY DON'T YOU INTRODUCE ME TO THAT LADY BY YOUR SIDE?
YOU MUST KNOW WHO SHE IS YOU'VE HEARD THE RUMORS HAVE YOU NOT?
MURMUR
IT'S A PLEASURE TO MEET YOU AS WELL
IS THAT RIGHT?
WHAT AN INTIMIDATING ATMOSPHERE.
I CAN ALMOST FEEL THE TENSION IN THE ROOM
WE'VE MET ONCE BEFORE THOUGH HAVE WE NOT?
AH, YES
WELL I GUESS THIS WON'T DO

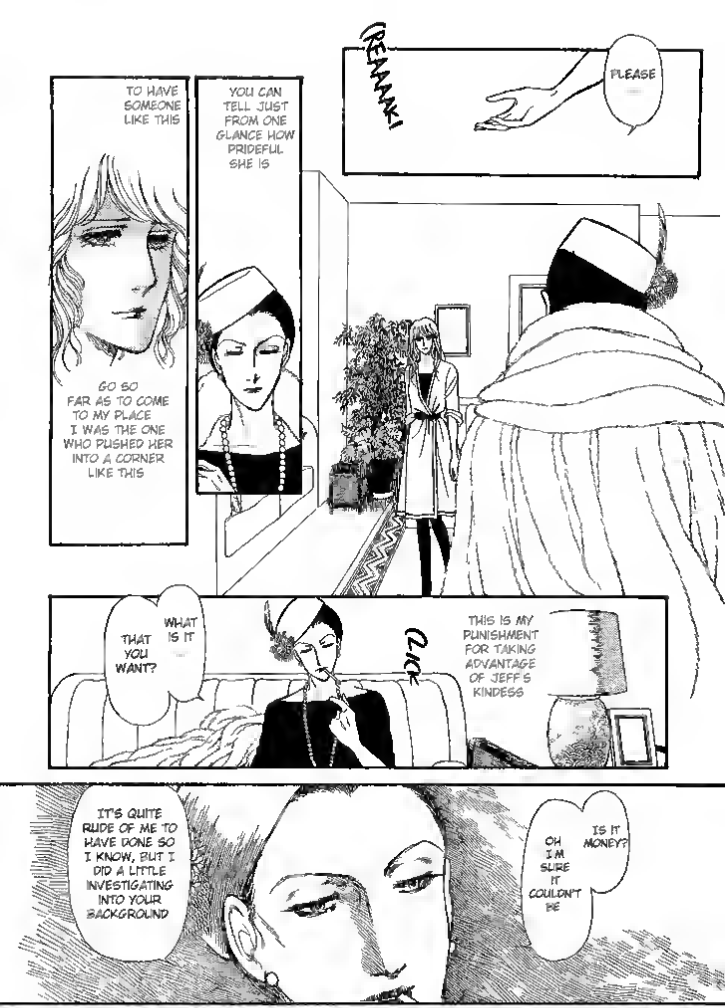
GULP
GASP!
I'M GUESSING YOU'RE FULFILLING HIS NEEDS?
WELL THEN
SHE'S MEASURING ME UP
TO SEE WHETHER I'M FIT TO BE WITH JEFF
THIS PERSON LOVES HIM!
SHE LOVES HIM!
HOW COULD THIS HAVE HAPPENED?
DOES JEFF KNOW?

EXCUSE ME MY
IT WAS SO AWFULLY HARD TO TAKE OFF THAT I GUESS I PUT TOO MUCH STRENGTH INTO IT

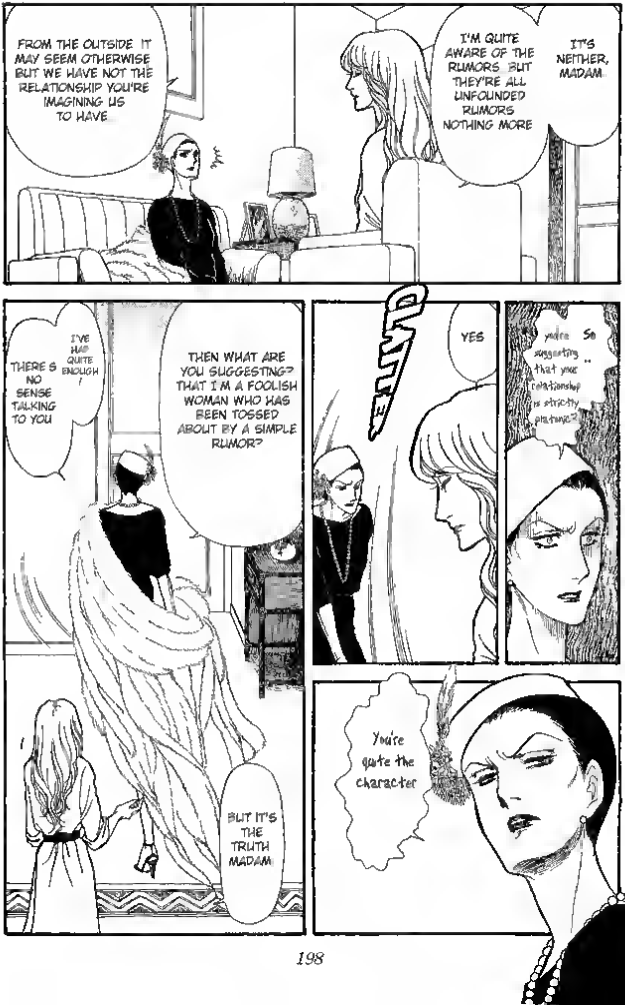
HOW CRUEL
CHUCKLES
HAHA...
CHUCKLES
SLAPPING THE OTHER'S CHEEK WITH ONE'S GLOVE
IS THAT HOW A BATTLE BETWEEN WOMEN COMMENCES?
GIGGLE GIGGLE
OH, I'M SURE IT WAS JUST A MISTAKE
HUH
WHAT A PRIDEFUL WOMAN
NOISE
NOISE
NOISE
U-UM ...
IT'S ALL RIGHT, JEFF.
I'M FINE.
IT'S NOTHING

DING DONG
Ah... yes?
IS THAT YOU JEFF? YOU'RE QUITE EARLY TODAY. IT'S STILL BEFORE NOON
WHAT ?!


I'M SORRY I'M NOT JEFF...
BUT WOULD YOU MIND IF I INTRUDE FOR A BIT?
Ah
Come on in


PLEASE
SHAAAK!
TO HAVE SOMEONE LIKE THIS
GO SO FAR AS TO COME TO MY PLACE I WAS THE ONE WHO PUSHED HER INTO A CORNER LIKE THIS
YOU CAN TELL JUST FROM ONE GLANCE HOW PRIDEFUL SHE IS
CLICK
WHAT IS IT THAT YOU WANT?
THIS IS MY PUNISHMENT FOR TAKING ADVANTAGE OF JEFF'S KINDESS
IT'S QUITE RUDE OF ME TO HAVE DONE SO I KNOW, BUT I DID A LITTLE INVESTIGATING INTO YOUR BACKGROUND
OH I'M SURE IT COULDN'T BE
IS IT MONEY?

ARE YOU LOOKING FOR MARRIAGE PERHAPS?
OR IS IT JUST A FLING?
SHE SPEAKS SMOOTHLY WITHOUT PAUSING FOR INTONATION
YOUR PARENTS LEFT YOU QUITE A HEFTY INHERITANCE.
THE WAY SHE ENDS HER SENTENCES ARE MUCH TOO SHARP TO BE NATURAL
I CAN TELL SHE'S HOLDING BACK HER EMOTIONS
PERHAPS IT'S THE SAME FOR JEFF?
IT MIGHT JUST BE THAT HE FEELS THE SAME WAY ABOUT HER
THE PRIDE THAT HAS BECOME A PART OF HER DOESN'T ALLOW HER TO SPEAK HONESTLY ABOUT HER FEELINGS.
SHE ACTS AS IF SHE DOESN'T CARE FOR HIM
SHE ACTS AS IF SHE ISN'T HURT BY ALL THIS


FROM THE OUTSIDE IT MAY SEEM OTHERWISE BUT WE HAVE NOT THE RELATIONSHIP YOU'RE IMAGINING US TO HAVE
I'M QUITE AWARE OF THE RUMORS BUT THEY'RE ALL UNFOUNDED RUMORS NOTHING MORE
IT'S NEITHER, MADAM
I'VE HAD QUITE ENOUGH!
THERE'S NO SENSE TALKING TO YOU
THEN WHAT ARE YOU SUGGESTING? THAT I'M A FOOLISH WOMAN WHO HAS BEEN TOSSED ABOUT BY A SIMPLE RUMOR?
BUT IT'S THE TRUTH MADAM
Pause
YES
So you're suggesting .. that your relationship is strictly platonic?
You're quite the character

THEN WHY DID YOU COME HERE?!
IF JEFF WISHES FOR A RELATIONSHIP WITH YOU... THAT'S FINE I HAVE NO INTEREST IN IT.
WE BOTH ARE MATURE ENOUGH TO KNOW THAT THAT COULDN'T POSSIBLY BE TRUE.
WHY DO YOU HIDE THE TRUTH?
IT'S BECAUSE YOU LOVE HIM, DON'T YOU?!
DO YOU KNOW, THAT DESPITE ALL THAT, YOUR EYES STILL FOLLOW JEFF?
AS IF YOU DON'T CARE?
WHY DO YOU PRETEND AS IF YOU DON'T LOVE HIM,
ISN'T IT BECAUSE YOU BOTH STILL LOVE EACH OTHER?
WHY IS IT THAT ALTHOUGH YOU'VE LIVED SEPARATELY FOR YEARS, YOU HAVEN'T ONCE BROUGHT UP THE TOPIC OF DIVORCE?
IF YOU'RE ONLY GOING TO HURT YOURSELF CLADDING YOURSELF IN INDIFFERENCE, WHY DON'T YOU JUST SAY THE TRUTH?

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IT'S JUST THAT HE WISHES THAT HE COULD
MADAME
IT'S NOT THAT JEFF LOVES ME
WE BOTH
HAD GOTTEN SO TIRED OF FACING REALITY
THAT WE TRIED TO SEE A DREAM IN EACH OTHER.
What would you know ..
THEN I'M SURE YOU'LL BOTH
IF YOU WERE JUST HONEST WITH YOUR FEELINGS
MADAME

I'D MUCH RATHER WE JUST CONTINUED HATING EACH OTHER!
Are you saying I should be honest with my feelings... with a man who won't even look my way?
What an outrageous suggestion.
UGH

I've had enough

Jera ...
That's right, I love you. I loved a husband who was so wrapped up in his work that he hardly ever came home.
an ambitious husband who only married me for my fortunes... despite the fact that I loved you.

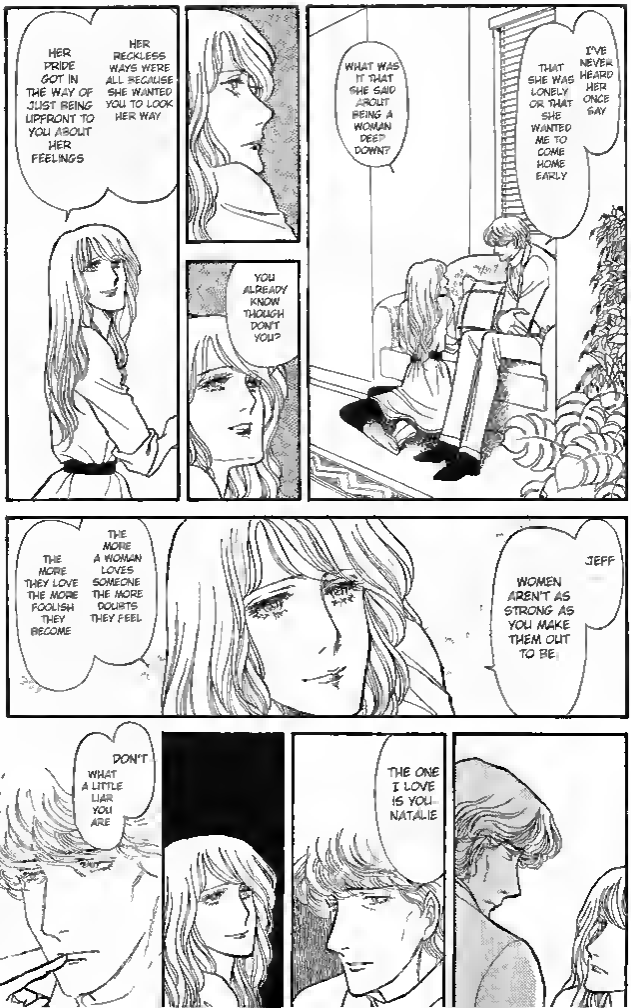
I WANTED TO SPEND EVERY LAST CENT OF ALL THAT PRECIOUS MONEY OF YOURS.
I DETESTED YOUR WORK. YOUR RICHES
ALL YOU WERE EVER INTERESTED IN THOUGH WAS BECOMING SUCCESSFUL! YOU NEVER ONCE LOOKED MY WAY!

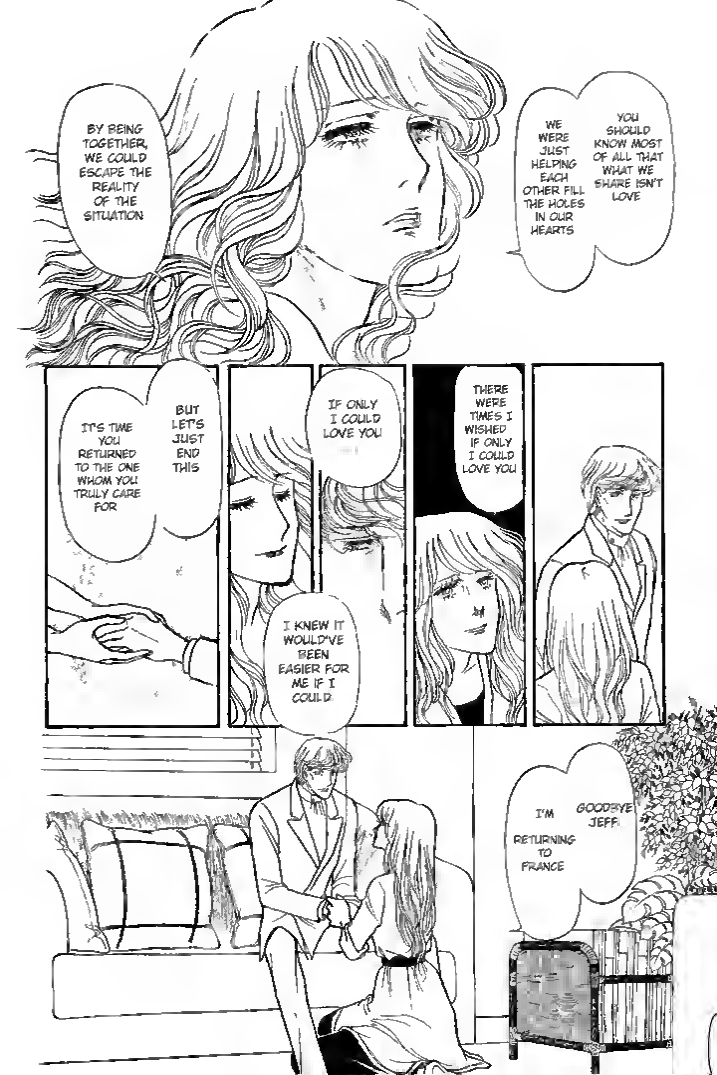
I can't watch you as you gaze at another
I'm sick and tired of this. I can't live my life like this anymore.
I'm sick of being a wife in name only
Deep down, I'm a woman, like any other.

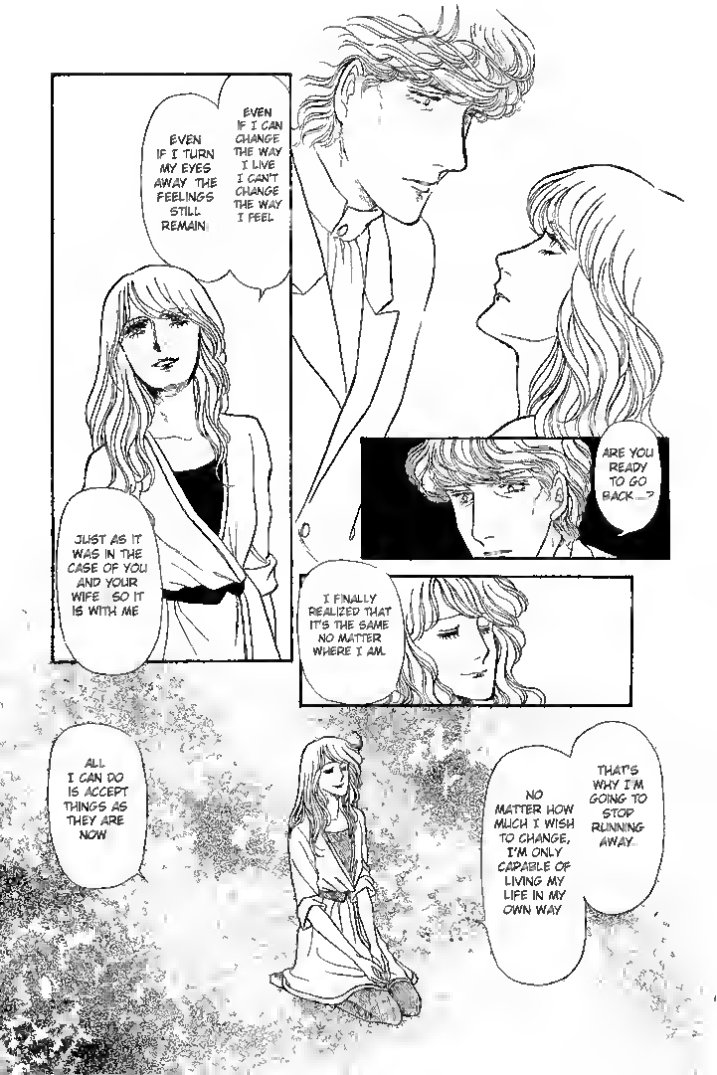
Madame
JEFF!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?! CHASE AFTER HER!
JEFF!! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
Wh... was that just now?
I can't believe it
She loves me...?
That can't be...
I've never even seen her cry like this before

What's the point
IN HER CRYING IN FRONT OF ME NOW?
JEFF
EVERYTHING SHE TOLD YOU JUST NOW IS THE TRUTH
YES
THAT SEEMS TO BE THE CASE

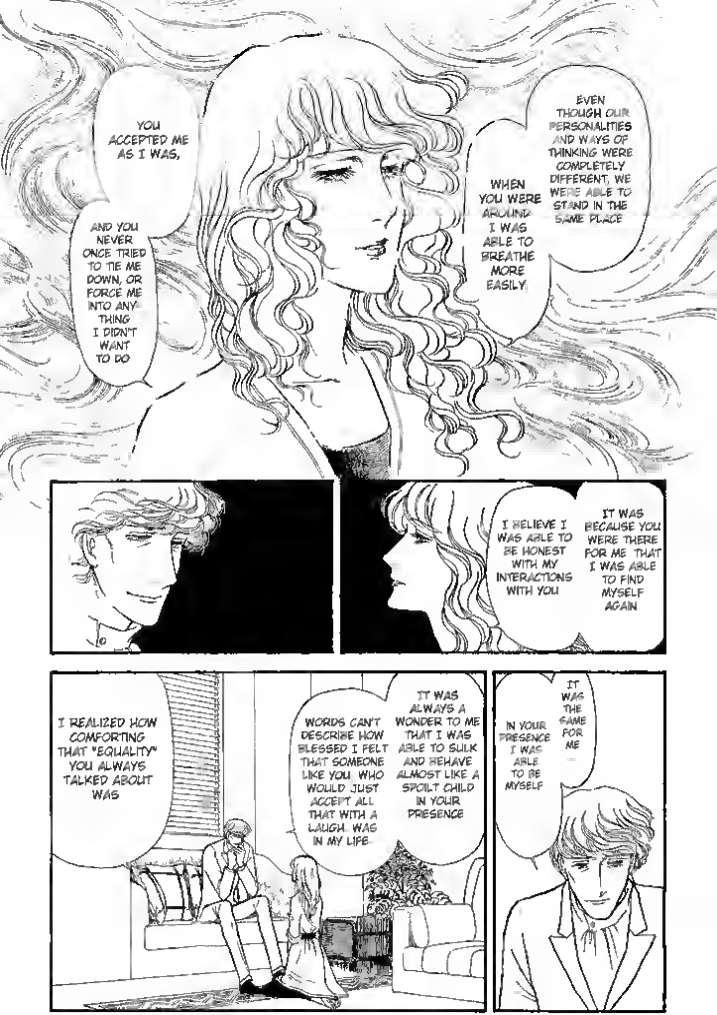
YOU LOVE HER, DON'T YOU?
YES
YOU WERE TRYING YOUR HARDEST TO BE SOMEONE FIT FOR YOUR WIFE AND YOUR WIFE'S FAMILY ISN'T THAT RIGHT?
YES
YOU DIDN'T WANT THEM TO THINK THAT YOU MARRIED HER FOR HER FORTUNES?
IN THE BEGINNING THAT WAS THE REASON
AFTER A WHILE THOUGH, I GOT CAUGHT UP WITH THE SOCIALIZATIONS OF UPPER SOCIETY
AND SHE STARTED DOING AS SHE WISHED,
SHE WENT OFF TO HAVE HER FUN, AND SHE BEGAN TO USE MONEY RECKLESSLY
AT THE END OF THE DAY I'M A MAN, LIKE ANY OTHER
I LOVE HER...?
WHO WOULD BELIEVE THAT?


HER PRIDE GOT IN THE WAY OF JUST BEING UPFRONT TO YOU ABOUT HER FEELINGS
HER RECKLESS WAYS WERE ALL BECAUSE SHE WANTED YOU TO LOOK HER WAY
YOU ALREADY KNOW THOUGH DON'T YOU?
WHAT WAS IT THAT SHE SAID ABOUT BEING A WOMAN DEEP DOWN?
THAT SHE WAS LONELY OR THAT SHE WANTED ME TO COME HOME EARLY
I'VE NEVER HEARD HER ONCE SAY
THE MORE THEY LOVE THE MORE FOOLISH THEY BECOME
THE MORE A WOMAN LOVES SOMEONE THE MORE DOUBTS THEY FEEL
JEFF
WOMEN AREN'T AS STRONG AS YOU MAKE THEM OUT TO BE.
DON'T WHAT A LITTLE LIAR YOU ARE
THE ONE I LOVE IS YOU NATALIE

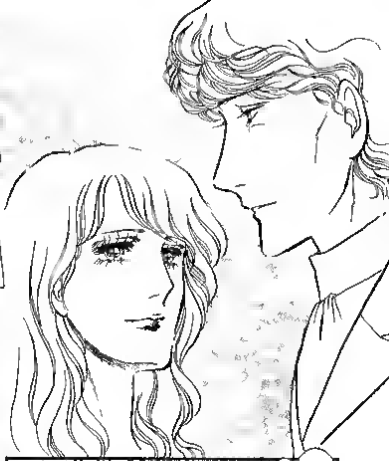

BY BEING TOGETHER, WE COULD ESCAPE THE REALITY OF THE SITUATION
WE WERE JUST HELPING EACH OTHER FILL THE HOLES IN OUR HEARTS
YOU SHOULD KNOW MOST OF ALL THAT WHAT WE SHARE ISN'T LOVE
IT'S TIME YOU RETURNED TO THE ONE WHOM YOU TRULY CARE FOR
BUT LET'S JUST END THIS
IF ONLY I COULD LOVE YOU
I KNEW IT WOULD'VE BEEN EASIER FOR ME IF I COULD
THERE WERE TIMES I WISHED IF ONLY I COULD LOVE YOU
I'M RETURNING TO FRANCE
GOODBYE JEFF


EVEN IF I TURN MY EYES AWAY THE FEELINGS STILL REMAIN
EVEN IF I CAN CHANGE THE WAY I LIVE I CAN'T CHANGE THE WAY I FEEL
ARE YOU READY TO GO BACK...?
JUST AS IT WAS IN THE CASE OF YOU AND YOUR WIFE SO IT IS WITH ME
I FINALLY REALIZED THAT IT'S THE SAME NO MATTER WHERE I AM.
ALL I CAN DO IS ACCEPT THINGS AS THEY ARE NOW
NO MATTER HOW MUCH I WISH TO CHANGE, I'M ONLY CAPABLE OF LIVING MY LIFE IN MY OWN WAY
THAT'S WHY I'M GOING TO STOP RUNNING AWAY

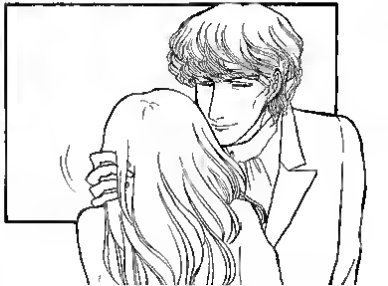
I FINALLY REALIZED HOW MUCH I WAS RELYING ON OTHERS
I BEGAN TO BE ABLE TO SEE THINGS I WAS NEVER ABLE TO BEFORE
IN THE BEGINNING, I ARRIVED ALMOST CRIPPLED BY MY EMOTIONS,
EVEN IF IT'S NOT ALWAYS THE VIBRANT LIFE, IT'LL BE A HONEST WAY OF LIVING...
I WANT TO BE ABLE TO CHOOSE MY DECISIONS IN LIFE.
RATHER THAN ALWAYS BEING SWEPT INTO THE EASY WAY OF LIFE,
I WANT TO PUT AN END TO THE ME
BUT AFTER I CAME HERE I WAS ABLE TO LITTLE BY LITTLE, BUILD MYSELF BACK
I BEGAN TO BE ABLE TO OPEN UP MY MIND
REGARDING MYSELF YOU FRANCIS AND MY FRIENDS
THAT WAS ALWAYS TURNING AWAY FROM THINGS THAT I DIDN'T WANT TO ACKNOWL-EDGE

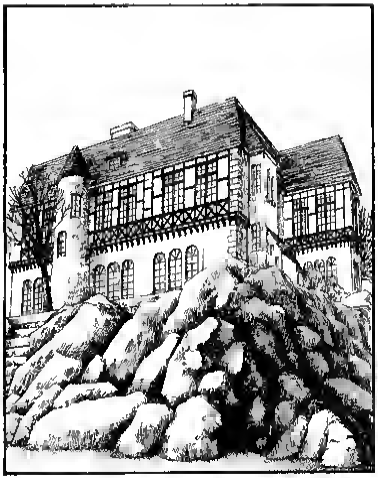

YOU ACCEPTED ME AS I WAS,
AND YOU NEVER ONCE TRIED TO TIE ME DOWN, OR FORCE ME INTO ANYTHING I DIDN'T WANT TO DO
WHEN YOU WERE AROUND I WAS ABLE TO BREATHE MORE EASILY
EVEN THOUGH OUR PERSONALITIES AND WAYS OF THINKING WERE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT, WE WERE ABLE TO STAND IN THE SAME PLACE
I BELIEVE I WAS ABLE TO BE HONEST WITH MY INTERACTIONS WITH YOU
IT WAS BECAUSE YOU WERE THERE FOR ME THAT I WAS ABLE TO FIND MYSELF AGAIN
I REALIZED HOW COMFORTING THAT "EQUALITY" YOU ALWAYS TALKED ABOUT WAS
WORDS CAN'T DESCRIBE HOW BLESSED I FELT THAT SOMEONE LIKE YOU WHO WOULD JUST ACCEPT ALL THAT WITH A LAUGH WAS IN MY LIFE
IT WAS ALWAYS A WONDER TO ME THAT I WAS ABLE TO SULK AND BEHAVE ALMOST LIKE A SPOILT CHILD IN YOUR PRESENCE
IN YOUR PRESENCE I WAS ABLE TO BE MYSELF
IT WAS THE SAME FOR ME

NO

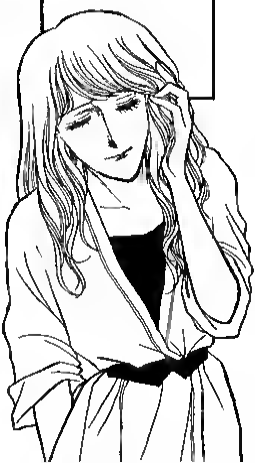

THIS IS ONLY JUST THE BEGINNING FOR BOTH OF US...

YOU'RE RIGHT
NOW'S WHEN EVERYTHING REALLY BEGINS...





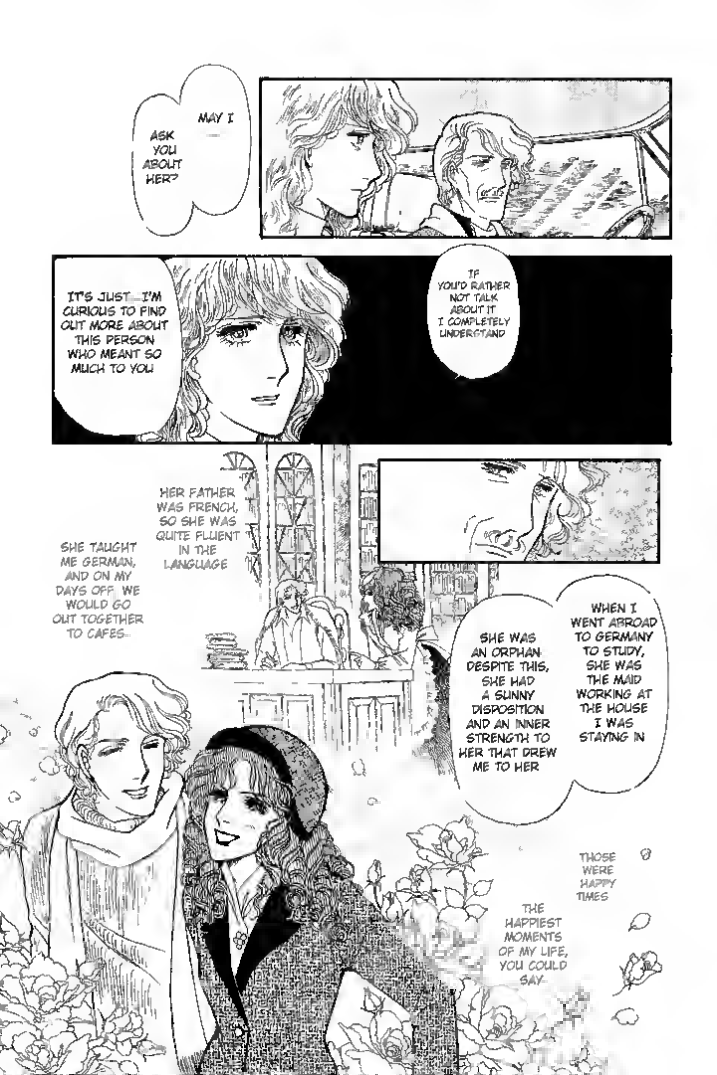
GOODBYE LISA, MY L'ENTRAGER.



I GOT WORD THAT SHE PASSED ON A LONG TIME AGO
IT SEEMS SHE WAS WORKING AS A LIVE-IN MAID IN THE NANTES
IT'S A PLACE NOT 200KM FROM HERE

SINCE SHE WAS FROM THE COUNTRY WE WERE AT WAR WITH
SHE PASSED AWAY AT THE PEAK OF THE UPRISING I'M SURE THEY DIDN'T EVEN SET UP A PROPER BURIAL FOR HER
She lived so closeby
IF THERE ARE ANY MEMENTOS OF HER STILL LEFT, I'D LIKE TO HOLD A PROPER MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR HER
SO I'LL BE HEADING THERE
PIERRE THE DRIVER'S AWAY ON HOLIDAY RIGHT NOW
VAUGHE ARE YOU GOING BY CAR?
I'LL BE FINE BY MYSELF

VAUGHE, WAIT!
I'LL GO WITH YOU!
I DON'T HAVE SCHOOL TOMORROW... AND I'D FEEL BETTER IF I WENT WITH YOU!
I'LL BE FINE BY MYSELF
AND, MAY I REMIND YOU, IT'S ONLY BEEN RECENTLY YOU RECEIVED YOUR DRIVER'S LICENSE
BUT ME GOING WITH YOU WOULD BE BETTER THAN YOU GOING AT IT ALONE
SO PLEASE, VAUGHE ?
I'M WORRIED FOR YOU I WANT TO GO WITH YOU!
IF YOU START MAKING YOUR WAY THERE NOW IT'LL BE WELL INTO NIGHT BY THE TIME YOU GET TO YOUR DESTINATION
DO I HAVE THAT TERRIBLE OF AN EXPRESSION ON MY FACE ?


MAY I ASK YOU ABOUT HER?
IF YOU'D RATHER NOT TALK ABOUT IT I COMPLETELY UNDERSTAND
IT'S JUST... I'M CURIOUS TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THIS PERSON WHO MEANT SO MUCH TO YOU
HER FATHER WAS FRENCH, SO SHE WAS QUITE FLUENT IN THE LANGUAGE
SHE TAUGHT ME GERMAN, AND ON MY DAYS OFF WE WOULD GO OUT TOGETHER TO CAFES...
WHEN I WENT ABROAD TO GERMANY TO STUDY, SHE WAS THE MAID WORKING AT THE HOUSE I WAS STAYING IN
SHE WAS AN ORPHAN DESPITE THIS, SHE HAD A SUNNY DISPOSITION AND AN INNER STRENGTH TO HER THAT DREW ME TO HER
THOSE WERE HAPPY TIMES
THE HAPPIEST MOMENTS OF MY LIFE, YOU COULD SAY...

PERHAPS IT'S A FATE OF SOME SORTS THAT I WOULD BE SO CLOSE TO SOMEONE WHO SHARED THE SAME LAST NAME AS HER
SHE SHARED THE SAME LAST NAME AS YOU
FLORIA DEALBERGE
FLORIA
TO THINK SHE CAME FROM GERMANY TO LIVE HERE BY HERSELF
SHE MUST'VE GONE THROUGH MANY HARDSHIPS
MADAME IS WAITING FOR YOU
BARL LAN BERRE?

WELCOME, EARL.
MY NAME IS EDETTE JANBERRE, THE HEAD OF OF THIS HOUSEHOLD
WE LIVED SO CLOSEBY, AND YET I WAS NEVER ABLE TO COME AND SEE YOU
SHE DIED OF SICKNESS ON A FOREIGN LAND IN WHICH SHE KNEW NO ONE
MY BODY ISN'T AS STRONG AS IT USED TO BE, I APOLOGIZE.
PLEASE FEEL FREE TO STAY AS YOU ARE NOW.
WE ARE THE ONES WHO SUDDENLY CAME INTRUDING ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE.
I REMEMBER HER WELL.
SHE HAD A SWEET DISPOSITION, BUT AS I'M SURE YOU'RE AWARE GERMANS AT THAT TIME WEREN'T VERY HIGHLY THOUGHT OF
BUT MY HUSBAND, WHO IS NO LONGER OF THIS WORLD, TOOK PITY ON HER.
FORTUNATELY, SHE WAS ABLE TO SPEAK FRENCH, SO IT WAS DECIDED THAT SHE WOULD WORK IN THIS HOUSE.

OH, IT WAS SUCH A TRAGEDY
SHE WORKED HERE FOR ABOUT TWO YEARS BEFORE A COMMON COLD ENDED HER LIFE
IT SEEMS SHE SUFFERED MANY HARDSHIPS BEFORE COMING HERE, AND BY THE TIME SHE STARTED WORKING HERE SHE WAS NOT IN GOOD HEALTH
AND SO SHE WAS TAKEN THERE TO BE BURIED
IF MEMORY SERVES ME RIGHT SHE HAD A RELATIVE FROM HER FATHER'S SIDE IN NAZAIRE
IS THERE A GRAVE?
HERE IS THE ADDRESS
I PRAY THAT THE ADDRESS HASN'T CHANGED SINCE THEN
SHE HAD BEEN SENDING HER WAGES THERE EACH MONTH. SO WE ALSO SENT ALL HER BELONGINGS THERE AS WELL
WE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE BETTER FOR HER TO BE BURIED IN HER HOMELAND RATHER THAN ON FOREIGN SOIL

VAUGHE ...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT I SHOULD SAY AT TIMES LIKE THESE ...
BUT PLEASE CHEER UP!
YES
I JUST HOPE THE HOUSE IS STILL THERE
WE'RE NOT TOO FAR FROM SAINT-NAZAIRE
TO THINK SHE WAS LIVING SUCH A HARD LIFE ...
WHILE I WAS LIVING UNDER THE CARE OF MY PARENTS WITHOUT A SINGLE WANT,
SHE LIVED SO CLOSEBY AND YET TO THINK HOW SHE DIED OF SICK-NESS
I KEEP THINKING, IF ONLY I'D KNOWN SOONER.

I NEVER THOUGHT I'D BE ONE TO OPEN UP ABOUT THESE KINDS OF THINGS TO YOU.
IS IT JUST THAT I'VE GROWN OLD?
OR IS IT JUST THAT YOU'VE BECOME AN ADULT—?
YOU SHOULD'VE SEEN HOW THEY JUST CAME TROOPING DOWN HERE DURING THE WAR.
BUT WE'RE DISTANT RELATIVES.
WELL YEAH YOU'RE RIGHT 'BOUT ME BEING RELATED TO THAT GERMAN WOMAN'S FATHER.
KATRINA! SERGE! WHAT TIME DO YOU THINK IT IS?! GET TO BED!
Okay, Grandma!
ABOUT HOW TAKING IN A GERMAN WOMAN INTO THE HOUSE'D ONLY SPELL TROUBLE
MY MOTHER WAS COMPLAINING

I'M SORRY TO BOTHER YOU SO LATE AT NIGHT
WELL, IT'S TRUE THAT WE WERE
PRETTY POOR.
WHAT?!
THE COUPLE OF COINS SHE SENT EACH MONTH HARDLY PUT ANY FOOD INTO THE CHILDREN'S MOUTHS
BUT MY FATHER HAD A SOFT SPOT FOR HER, YOU SEE.
THAT'S THE ONLY REASON WHY WE TOOK THE CHILD OF THAT GERMAN GIRL IN
She had a child...?
THAT'S RIGHT. HE WAS QUITE THE HEARTY EATER TOO, I REMEMBER.
SHE WENT AROUND SPOUTING LIES ABOUT HOW THE CHILD WAS THE SON OF SOME DISTINGUISHED FAMILY. HAH!

Vaughe, could it be that..
P-Perhaps...
DO YOU KNOW WHERE HE IS NOW?!
WELL... THAT MOTHER OF HIS WENT AND DIED AN EARLY GRAVE
MY MOTHER TOLD ME TO TAKE HIM TO AN ORPHANAGE,
BUT EVEN I WAS RELUCTANT TO DO THAT, WHAT WITH IT BEING KNOWN HOW TERRIBLE CHILDREN ARE TREATED THERE
WHILE I WAS THINKING ABOUT WHAT I SHOULD DO WITH HIM, I HEARD WORD ABOUT A RICH FAMILY WHO WERE CELEBRATING THE BIRTH OF THEIR FIRST BORN
THINKING IT'D BE BETTER THAN LEAVING HIM AT AN ORPHANAGE, I LEFT HIM AT THE STEPS OF THAT FAMILY'S HOUSE
SHE'S TALKING ABOUT NATALIE'S HOME!
THE ROHME FAMILY WAS THE WEALTHIEST OF FAMILIES AROUND HERE, AND I THOUGHT CHANCES WERE GOOD THEY'D TAKE HIM IN SEEING AS HOW THEY WERE IN THE MIDST OF A CELEBRATION...

Was that child's name...
Francis?
Francis ...
then you're my ...
OH, I'M SURPRISED DID YOU KNOW HIM?
SO HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT WOMAN ANYWAY?
I'M VAUGHE'S GRANDSON ?!
GRAND-SON?!

Volume 3 Chapter 25

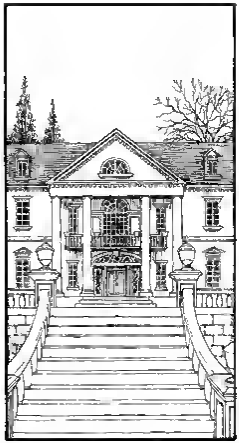
What a coincidence...
that you were my-
Francis, you were.
So...
I DIDN'T KNOW OF YOUR CONNECTION TO ME
AND YET HERE WE WERE, LIVING TOGETHER
thank you very much. I'm sorry to intrude
Ah... y-yes
I HAVE AN EARLY DAY TOMORROW
IS THAT ALL?
YAWNS

OH PLEASE ACCEPT THIS IT'S SWEETS FOR YOUR CHILDREN
MY...
THANK YOU...
OH, NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT
THAT'S RIGHT THERE WAS SOMETHING OF HERS STILL LEFT IN THE SHED
WE GOT RID OF EVERYTHING ELSE
BUT MY FATHER WAS SET ON HOLDING ONTO THE PAINTING
THIS IS...
I REMEMBER, FLORIA.
IT WAS QUITE A BIT OF WORK FOR ME TO PAINT YOU WHEN YOU REFUSED TO SIT STILL
DESPITE THIS THOUGH, YOU WERE ALWAYS CRITICAL OF MY WORK,
INSISTENT THAT I PAINT YOU MORE BEAUTIFULLY.

WHAT A CRUDE GRAVE
ONLY A ROCK TO INDICATE YOUR GRAVE
—RUSTLE
WHAT A STRANGE TWIST OF FATE...
IT'S AS IF SHE'S PLAYING A JOKE ON US FROM HEAVEN
AND TO THINK I'D BE STANDING IN FRONT OF HER GRAVE WITH YOU BY MY SIDE
RIGHT UP UNTIL TONIGHT I HAD NO IDEA I EVEN HAD A CHILD...
to think I'm your grandson...
I can't believe it.
I still can't believe it, Vaughe...
MY GRANDMOTHER...

FRANCIS
I SENSED A CONNECTION TO YOU FROM THE FIRST TIME I SET EYES ON YOU
IT WAS EVEN A WONDER TO ME WHY I FELT SUCH AFFECTION TOWARDS YOU
that I really am your grandson it's just something we heard from someone
There's nothing to prove
What if she got it wrong though?
I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHO TO THANK
I'VE NEVER BELIEVED IN FATE MORE THAN I DO AT THIS VERY MOMENT
AS A TEACHER, THERE WERE ALWAYS MANY STUDENTS AROUND ME BUT YOU WERE DIFFERENT
THAT'S ENOUGH FOR ME I NEED NOT ASK FOR ANYTHING MORE
YOU REMIND ME SO MUCH OF MICHELE WHEN HE WAS A CHILD
WHY DIDN'T I REALIZE IT EARLIER?
I remind you of Michele...?

but she left me you, such a precious treasure that you are.
She died without being able to tell me anything
I'm so... blessed
That's right...you remind me of him so much...
IF ONLY THIS HAD COME OUT IN THE OPEN SOONER.
IF ONLY...



YOU SHOULD'VE SEEN HER, NORMALLY SO STRONG COME BACK IN A MESS WITH TEARS RUNNING DOWN HER FACE!
THIS IS THE LAST STRAW!
I'M GOING TO RING THE LAWYER, AND GET THEIR DIVORCE PAPERS DRAWN UP AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!

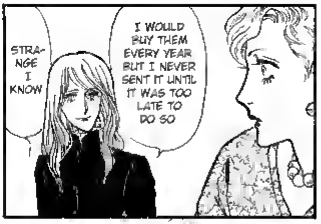
NATALIE
"
NATALIE
YOU COULD'VE LIVED YOUR LIFE WITH A SMILE UNDER THE SUN'S GENTLE RAYS
THEN, THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN NOTHING TO HOLD NATALIE AND DADDY APART
THEN, NOBODY WOULD'VE HAD TO BE UNHAPPY
THEY COULD'VE REALIZED A FAMILY SEEPED IN HAPPINESS — MORE SO THAN ANY OTHER

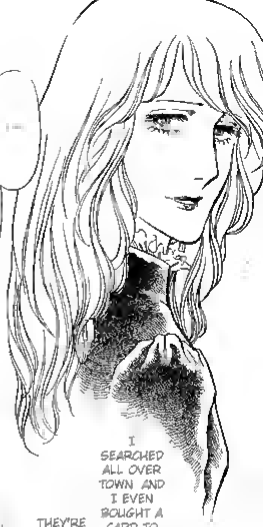
JERA SAID THAT SHE DOESN'T WANT TO SEE HIS FACE EVER AGAIN.
WELL I FOR ONE AM NOT SURPRISED! IT'S NO WONDER SHE HATES HIM!
IS JERA HERE? ISN'T SHE?
HONEY — YOU STILL HAVEN'T FIGURED OUT THE REAL REASON FOR HER TEARS?
I WON'T LET YOU STEP ONE FOOT INTO OUR HOUSE!
IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY, SAY IT THROUGH OUR LAWYER!
HAVE YOU NO SHAME?! YOU HAVE SOME NERVE TO SHOW UP HERE LIKE THIS!
WHAT IS IT THAT YOU CAME HERE TO DO
HMM?
I CAME HERE TO TAKE HER BACK

STOP TALKING FOOLISHNESS!
SHE'S GOING TO DIVORCE YOU. END OF STORY!
SHE'S GOING TO BE HANDFUL.
I'M PREPARED FOR THAT.
DARLING!! WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?!
I FOR ONE, AM NOT GOING TO FORGIVE HIM!
THIS MAN'S NOT FIT TO BE PART OF THE STEWART HOUSEHOLD!
CLINCH
HUSH!
HAVE YOU NOT REALIZED YET THAT THAT VERY ATTITUDE IS THE REASON FOR ALL THIS!
WHAT IS IT ABOUT JEFF THAT YOU DISLIKE SO MUCH?!
AND AT ANY RATE, IT'S NOT FOR US TO DECIDE! IT'S UP TO JERA

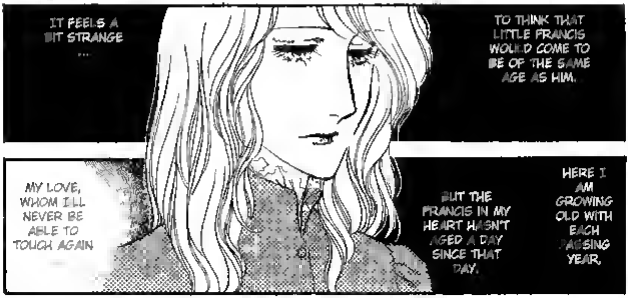
WHAT YOU FIND SO DISTASTEFUL IS NOT JEFF HIMSELF, BUT RATHER HIS ORIGINS
JERA CLEARLY CARES ABOUT HIM AND I'M QUITE FOND OF HIM AS WELL
DON'T TRY TO FORCE ONTO OTHERS YOUR WAY OF LIVING
IF SHE WON'T LISTEN TO WHAT YOU HAVE TO SAY GIVE HER ONE GOOD SMACK OR TWO
JERA'S IN THE BACK
WE'RE NOT A HOUSE-HOLD WHO CAN SAY THIS OR THAT ABOUT ANCES-TORY
MY GRAND-FATHER WAS A SOUTHERN MAN WHO MADE HIS RICHES OFF OIL
AS LONG AS SHE'S HAPPY, I'M SURE THIS WIFE OF MINE'LL HAVE LESS TO COMPLAIN ABOUT
EVEN THOUGH SHE'S AS SHE IS SHE'S STILL MY PRECIOUS DAUGHTER
THANK YOU, FATHER

HEY, NATALIE ARE YOU REALLY GOING BACK TO FRANCE?
JILL THAT'S ALL YOU'VE BEEN ASKING ME SINCE THIS MORNING!
I'M SORRY TO SAY IT BUT YES
DON'T COME TO THE AIRPORT WITH ME THOUGH
I'D BE MUCH TOO SAD FOR YOU TO COME SEE ME OFF.
I'VE ASKED JEFF TO DO THE SAME
OH, BUT THIS IS SO TRAGIC! TO THINK I'LL HAVE TO SAY GOODBYE TO SUCH A DEAR FRIEND! THIS IS MORE HORRIBLE THAN LOSING A LOVER!
LOVERS ARE REPLACEABLE BUT A GOOD FRIEND IS SO HARD TO FIND!
OH, WHAT ARE THESE?
THESE LOOKS LIKE PRESENTS, BUT NONE HAVE BEEN OPENED
THEY EVEN HAVE CARDS ATTACHED!


STRANGE I KNOW
I WOULD BUY THEM EVERY YEAR BUT I NEVER SENT IT UNTIL IT WAS TOO LATE TO DO SO


THEY'RE ALL THE GIFTS THAT I MISSED SENDING...
I SEARCHED ALL OVER TOWN AND I EVEN BOUGHT A CARD TO GO ALONG WITH IT

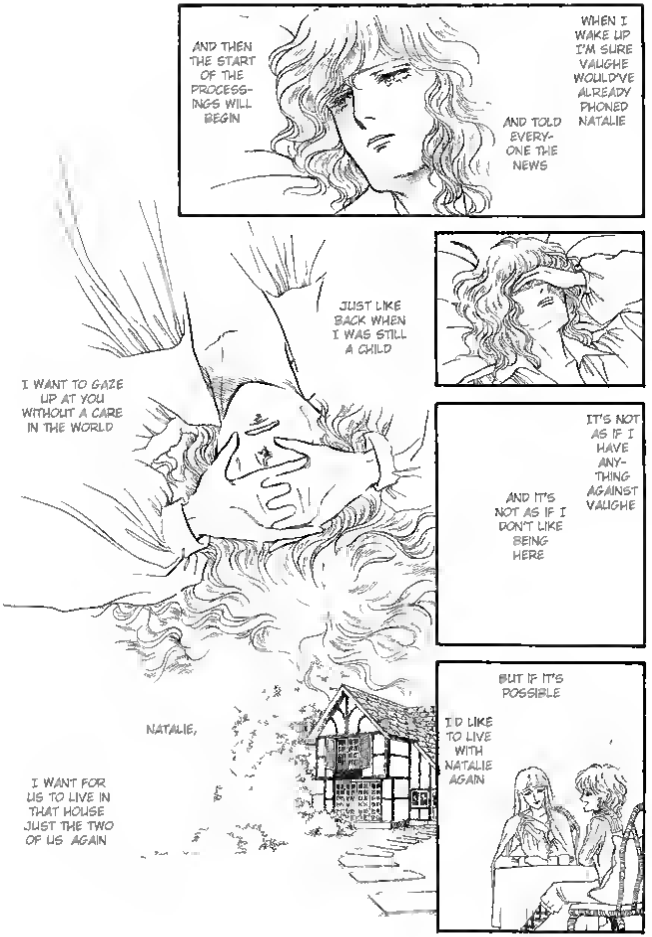
FRANCIS, HE'S TURNED 18 ALREADY
IT WAS ALSO AT 18 THAT HE PROPOSED TO ME
THEY'RE ALL GIFTS THAT WOULD BE MUCH TOO CHILDISH FOR HIM NOW


IT FEELS A BIT STRANGE ...
TO THINK THAT LITTLE FRANCIS WOULD COME TO BE OF THE SAME AGE AS HIM.
MY LOVE, WHOM I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO TOUCH AGAIN
BUT THE FRANCIS IN MY HEART HASN'T AGED A DAY SINCE THAT DAY.
HERE I AM GROWING OLD WITH EACH PASSING YEAR.

SCREECH
JEFF
JILL
GOODBYE TO ALL THOSE WHO WERE SO KIND TO ME.
GOODBYE AMERICA.

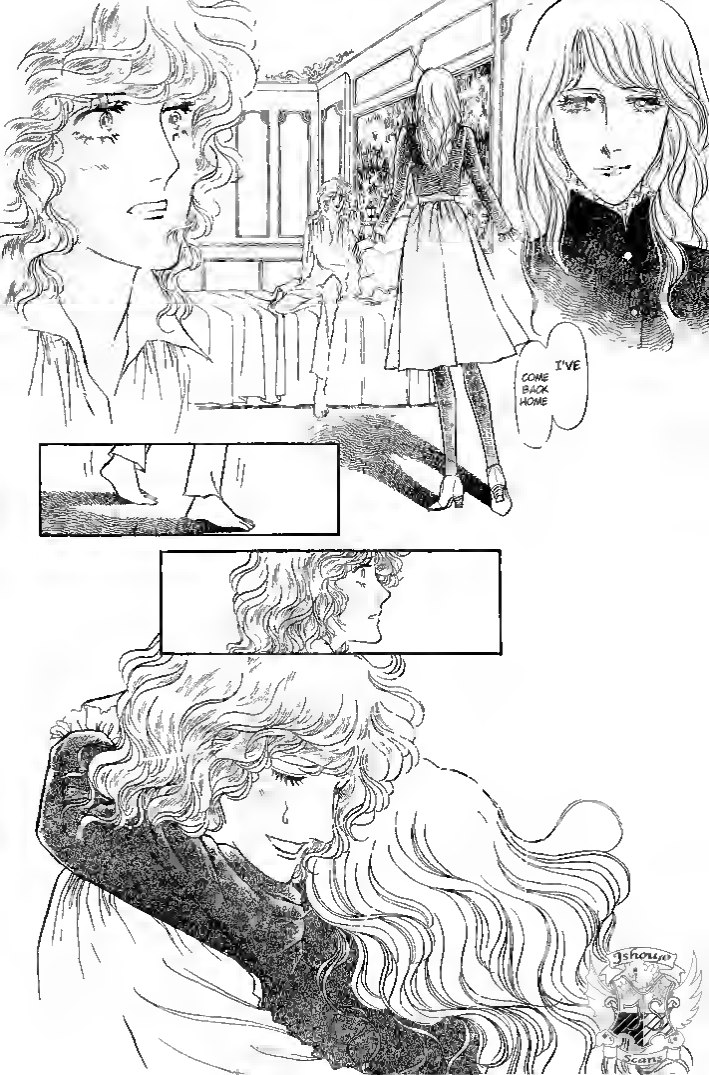
I LET YOUR HAND GO.
FRANCIS, I WONDER EVEN STILL, IF YOU'LL ACCEPT ME ONCE MORE?

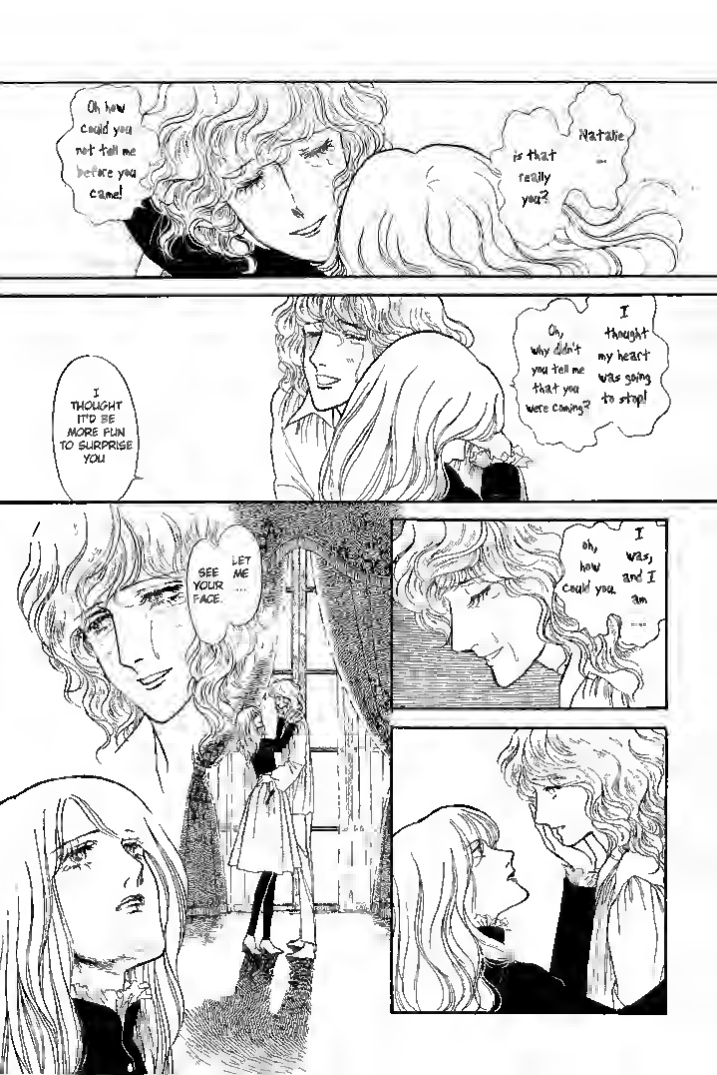
DOES THAT MEAN THERE'LL NEVER COME A TIME WHEN I'LL LIVE WITH NATALIE IN THAT HOUSE OF OURS AGAIN?
DOES THAT MEAN I'LL CONTINUE LIVING HERE THEN...?
NOW THAT IT'S BEEN REVEALED THAT I'M VAUGHN'S GRANDSON...
THUMP
WE WERE UP UNTIL SUNSET GOING 'ROUND
AND NOT ONLY THAT BUT SO MANY THINGS HAPPENED


AND THEN THE START OF THE PROCESS-INGS WILL BEGIN
WHEN I WAKE UP I'M SURE VAUGHE WOULD'VE ALREADY PHONED NATALIE
AND TOLD EVERY-ONE THE NEWS
JUST LIKE BACK WHEN I WAS STILL A CHILD
I WANT TO GAZE UP AT YOU WITHOUT A CARE IN THE WORLD
IT'S NOT AS IF I HAVE ANY-THING AGAINST VAUGHE
AND IT'S NOT AS IF I DON'T LIKE BEING HERE
BUT IF IT'S POSSIBLE
I'D LIKE TO LIVE WITH NATALIE AGAIN
NATALIE,
I WANT FOR US TO LIVE IN THAT HOUSE JUST THE TWO OF US AGAIN

NNN
RUSTLE
RUSTLE RUSTLE
EARL! EARL!
Ah
please ..let me
just sleep for a while longer
I was having .. a good .. dream ...

GOOD MORNING OR SHOULD IT BE GOOD AFTER-NOON?
WHAT KIND OF DREAM WERE YOU HAVING?
a dream about you ...
Ah ...
is this a continuation of the dream ...?


I'VE COME BACK HOME


Oh how could you not tell me before you came!
Natalie ...
is that really you?
I thought my heart was going to stop!
Oh, why didn't you tell me that you were coming?
I THOUGHT IT'D BE MORE FUN TO SURPRISE YOU
LET ME SEE YOUR FACE ...
I was, and I am ...
oh, how could you

I'M NOT EVEN... SURE WHAT TO SAY...
IT IS SUCH A MYSTERIOUS FATE THAT BROUGHT YOU TOGETHER
I HAVE TO LOOK UP AT YOU TO SEE YOUR FACE
YOU REALLY HAVE GROWN
I HEARD ABOUT THE NEWS FROM BARL.
I REALLY WAS QUITE SURPRISED
TO THINK YOU WERE HIS GRAND-SON!
YOUR FATHER ENDURED MANY HARDSHIPS BECAUSE HE WAS AN ORPHAN.
AND I'M SAD THAT YOU HAD TO GO THROUGH SIMILAR EXPERIENCES AS WELL
BUT THAT ALL ENDS WITH THIS...
YOU'LL NEVER HAVE TO FEEL INFERIOR BECAUSE OF YOUR BACK-GROUND
AND YOU CAN BECOME HAPPY TRULY HAPPY
YOU WERE THE ONE WHO WAS SUPPOSED TO BE HAPPY...

NATALIE YOUR UNHAPPINESS AND MY HAPPINESS ALWAYS SEEM TO OVERLAP
HOW CAN YOU SMILE AT THE NEWS LIKE THIS?
AREN'T YOU SAD? AREN'T YOU IN PAIN?
FROM NOW ON, YOU CAN LIVE AS A MEMBER OF THE LANDERRES
MY ROLE HAS COME TO AN END
NATALIE, IS THAT TRUE?!
Are you going to marry him just as he said you would?!
Is it because you're going to marry Jeff Howard 21
Francis..
We only found out about this last night...
Why did you come back so suddenly...?
Natalie... don't tell me you're...
Why... are you saying something like that...

and that's when he told me he was planning on proposing to you...
I went to his company to try to track your place down...
and later when I went to your apartment...

did you run into Jeff some-where?

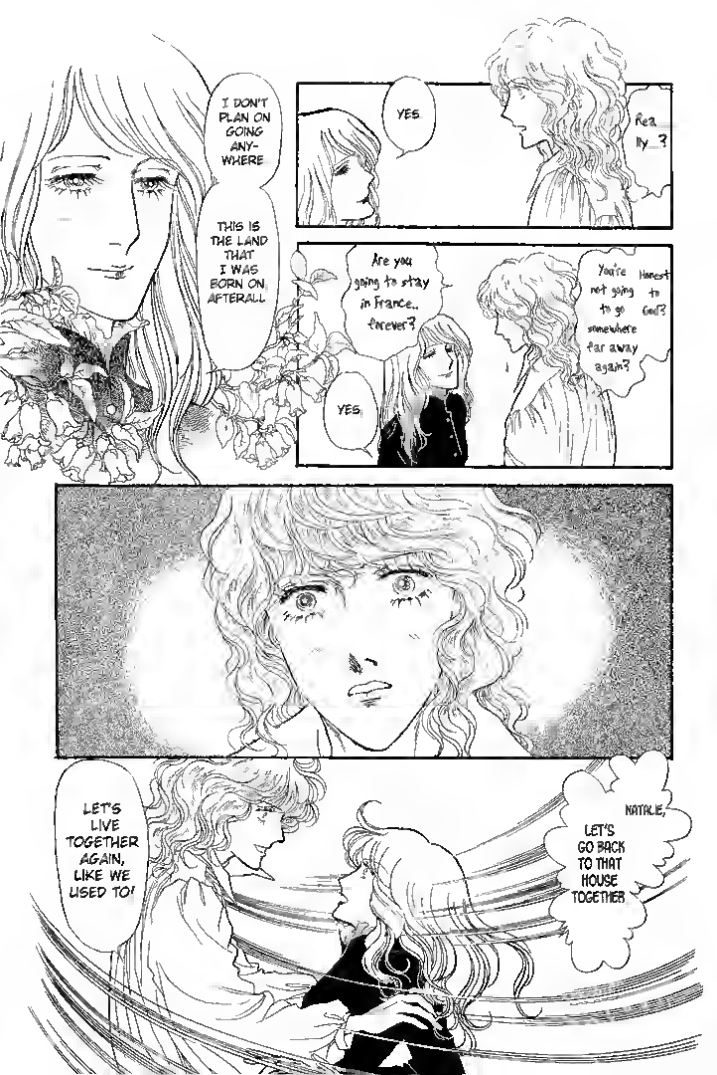
four and a half years ago...
When my art was selected... I went to the US on a study trip...

I CAME BACK TO LIVE HERE AGAIN
I'M NOT GOING TO MARRY JEFF

don't be silly Francis...

I saw you getting out of the car with him, looking so happy

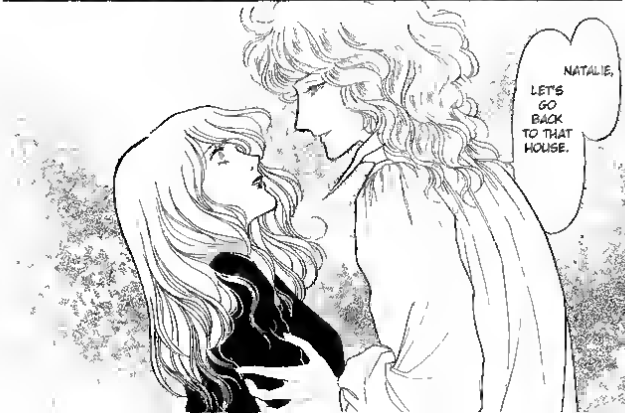
"HE WAS AROUND 14~15 A CUTE BOY WITH BLONDE HAIR HE WAS WAITING FOR YOU OUT IN THE RAIN."


I DON'T PLAN ON GOING ANY-WHERE
THIS IS THE LAND THAT I WAS BORN ON. AFTERALL
YES.
Rea lly...?
Are you going to stay in France.. forever?
YES.
You're not going to go somewhere far away again?
Honest to God?
NATALIE,
LET'S GO BACK TO THAT HOUSE TOGETHER
LET'S LIVE TOGETHER AGAIN, LIKE WE USED TO!

I'M GRADUATING THIS YEAR,
AND I PLAN ON CONTINUING WITH MY PAINTING WHILE I ATTEND UNIVERSITY
OH, BUT IT DOESN'T EVEN MATTER WHETHER I GO TO COLLEGE OR NOT

DID YOU KNOW? SOMEONE PURCHASED MY PAINTING!
IT'LL ONLY BE A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE I CAN LIVE OFF MY PAINTINGS ALONE!
AND YOU CAN SPEND YOUR DAYS WRITING CHILDREN'S BOOKS ONLY WHEN THE MOOD STRIKES YOU.

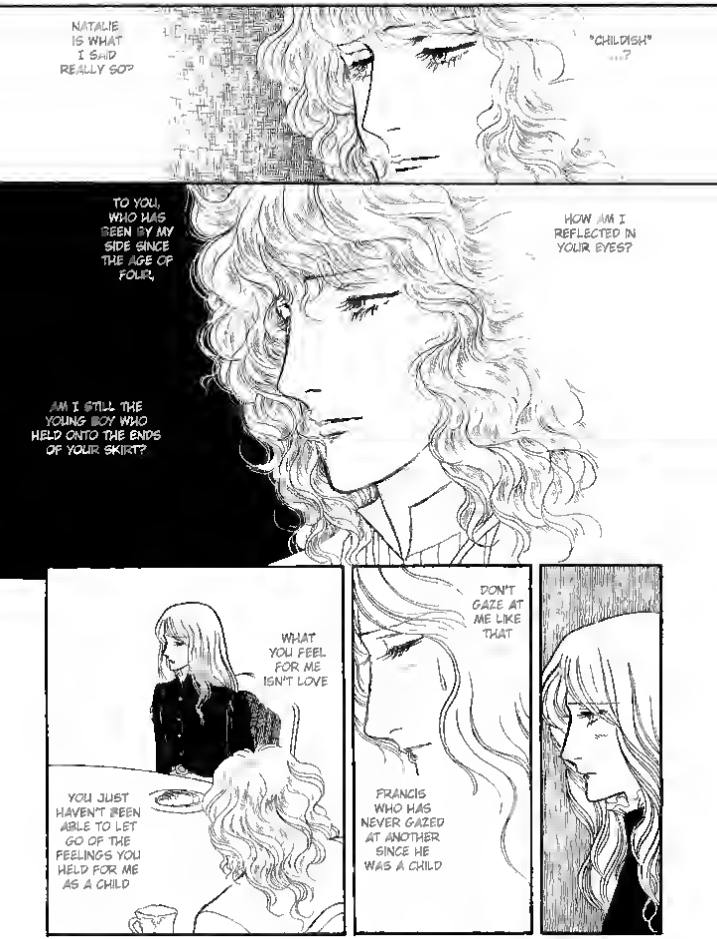
I CAN REACH ALL SORTS OF TALL PLACES NOW,
AND I'M STRONG!
I'M EVEN A PRETTY GOOD CONVERSATIONALIST IF I DO SAY SO MYSELF

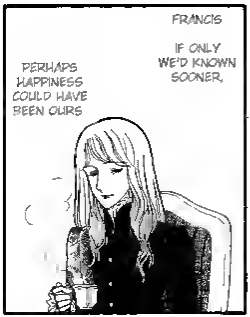

NATALIE, LET'S GO BACK TO THAT HOUSE.

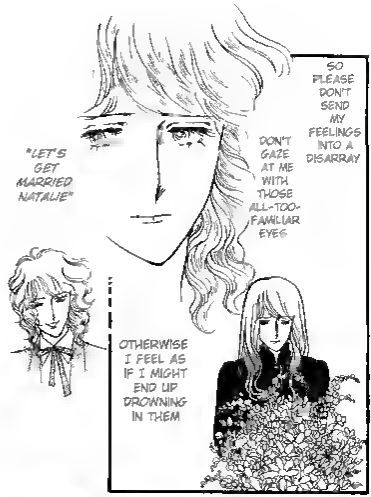
NATALIE
D-Don't be ridiculous, Francis — what are you saying?
You're the grandson of an Earl!
There's no way you could possibly do that.

FRANCIS...
THAT CHILD...
HE LOOKED AT ME IN THE VERY SAME WAY HIS FATHER USED TO
YOU SHOULD GO ON AND CHANGE WE'LL BE WAITING FOR YOU DOWN-STAIRS
YOU CAN'T LIVE YOUR LIFE SPOUTING CHILDISH NOTIONS LIKE THAT FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE
YOU'RE MUCH TOO OLD TO BE CLINGING ONTO YOUR GUARDIAN LIKE THIS
NATALIE!
SLII
HE'S NO LONGER THE CHILD I USED TO KNOW...
AND HE HELD ONTO ME WITH SUCH STRONG HANDS
WITH A MATURE FACE HE GAZED DOWN AT ME INQUIRINGLY
AS IF WANTING TO LOOK INTO MY VERY SOUL

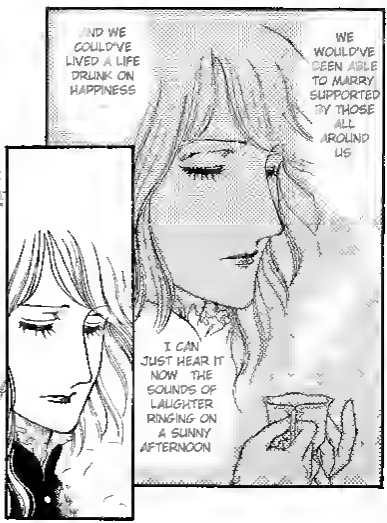
I JUST RECEIVED WORD THAT MICHELE AND THE OTHERS ARE HEADING HERE RIGHT NOW.
WELL, GOOD MORNING THERE FRANCIS.
FINE
JUST TEA'S
OH, AND THERE IS NATALIE'S SUDDEN HOMECOMING AS WELL
ALL THIS NEWS'VE SPOILED YOUR APPETITE?
WHAT IS IT FRANCIS?
YES

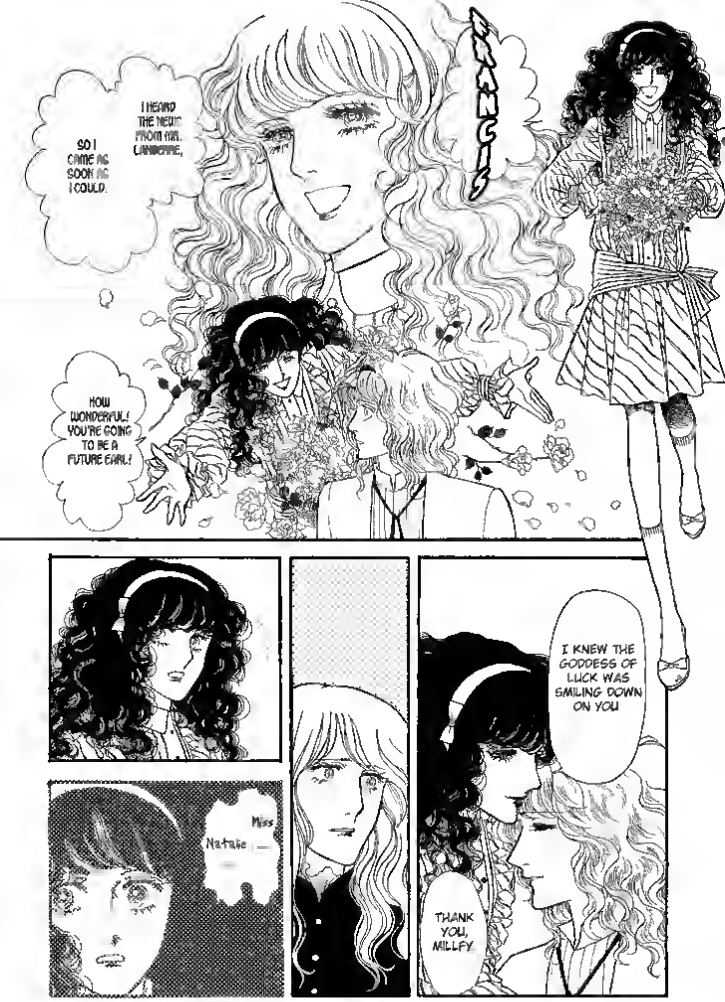

NATALIE IS WHAT I SAID REALLY SO?
"CHILDISH" ...?
TO YOU, WHO HAS BEEN BY MY SIDE SINCE THE AGE OF FOUR,
HOW AM I REFLECTED IN YOUR EYES?
AM I STILL THE YOUNG BOY WHO HELD ONTO THE ENDS OF YOUR SKIRT?
WHAT YOU FEEL FOR ME ISN'T LOVE
YOU JUST HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO LET GO OF THE FEELINGS YOU HELD FOR ME AS A CHILD
DON'T GAZE AT ME LIKE THAT
FRANCIS WHO HAS NEVER GAZED AT ANOTHER SINCE HE WAS A CHILD


FRANCIS
IF ONLY WE'D KNOWN SOONER,
PERHAPS HAPPINESS COULD HAVE BEEN OURS

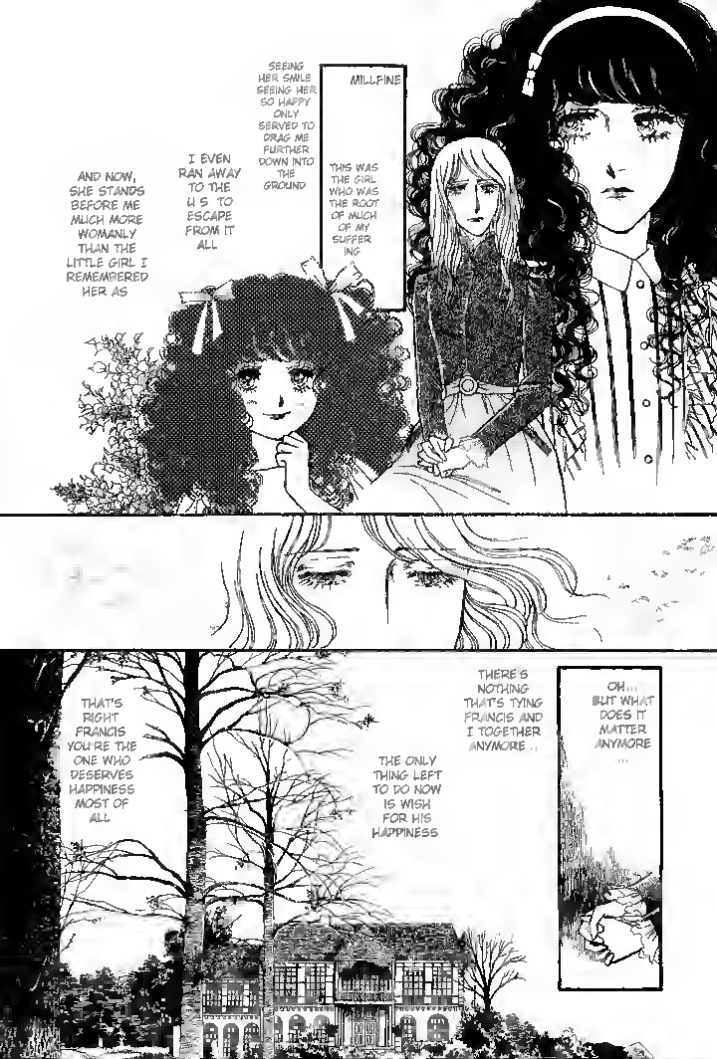

"LET'S GET MARRIED NATALIE"
SO PLEASE DON'T SEND MY FEELINGS INTO A DISARRAY
DON'T GAZE AT ME WITH THOSE ALL-TOO-FAMILIAR EYES
OTHERWISE I FEEL AS IF I MIGHT END UP DROWNING IN THEM

WHAT A DREAM OF A STORY

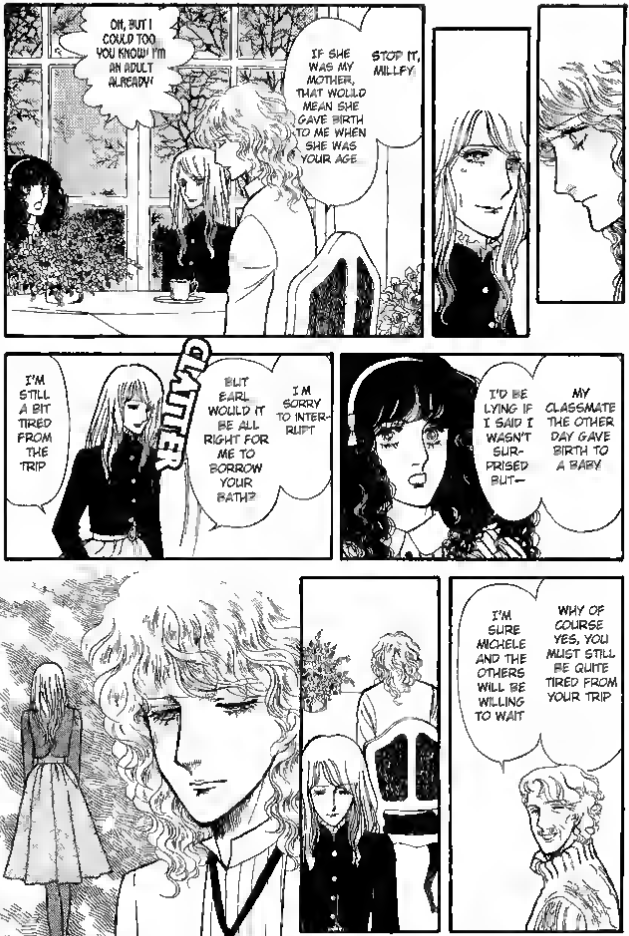

AND WE COULD'VE LIVED A LIFE DRUNK ON HAPPINESS
WE WOULD'VE BEEN ABLE TO MARRY SUPPORTED BY THOSE ALL AROUND US
I CAN JUST HEAR IT NOW THE SOUNDS OF LAUGHTER RINGING ON A SUNNY AFTERNOON

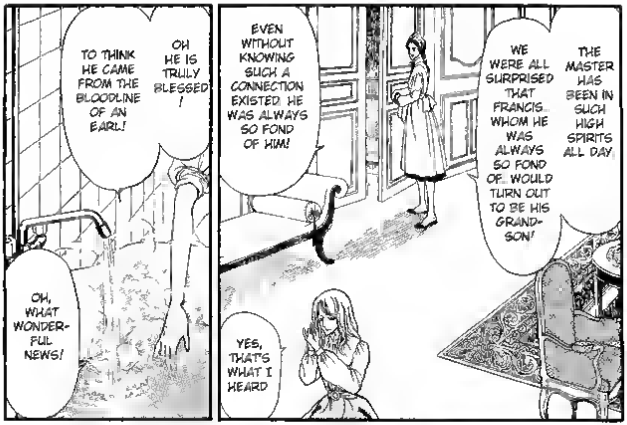

I HEARD THE NEWS FROM MR. LANGDYNE.
SO I CAME AS SOON AS I COULD.
HOW WONDERFUL! YOU'RE GOING TO BE A FUTURE EARL!
Miss Natalie...
I KNEW THE GODDESS OF LUCK WAS SMILING DOWN ON YOU
THANK YOU, MILLY.

When did you get back—?
SHE CAME OUT OF THE BLUE SO IT WAS A SURPRISE FOR ALL OF US JUST NOW
Oh, is that right—?
NO, THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING!
I STILL HAVEN'T GOTTEN A PROMISE OUT OF HIM!

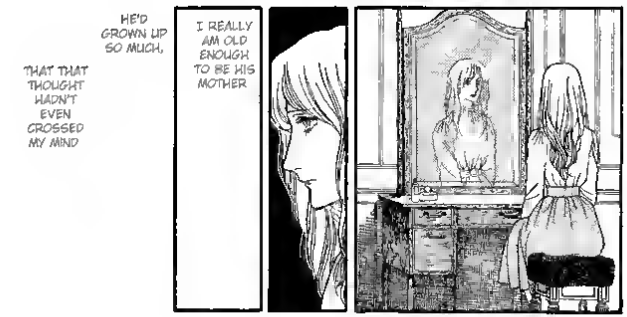

AND NOW, SHE STANDS BEFORE ME MUCH MORE WOMANLY THAN THE LITTLE GIRL I REMEMBERED HER AS
I EVEN RAN AWAY TO THE U.S. TO ESCAPE FROM IT ALL
SEEING HER SMILE SEEING HER SO HAPPY ONLY SERVED TO DRAG ME FURTHER DOWN INTO THE GROUND
MILLFINE
THIS WAS THE GIRL WHO WAS THE ROOT OF MUCH OF MY SUFFERING
THAT'S RIGHT FRANCIS YOU'RE THE ONE WHO DESERVES HAPPINESS MOST OF ALL
THE ONLY THING LEFT TO DO NOW IS WISH FOR HIS HAPPINESS
THERE'S NOTHING THAT'S TYING FRANCIS AND I TOGETHER ANYMORE...
OH... BUT WHAT DOES IT MATTER ANYMORE ...

I'M 16 NOW
Y-Yes
IT'S BEEN A WHILE MILLFINE
YOU'VE GROWN SO MUCH
NOW, NOW. DON'T JUST STAND THERE. HAVE A SEAT!
WE JUST HAD A LATE BREAKFAST, BUT WE'LL BE STARTING TEA SOON.
Ah, y-yes.
I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE OLD ENOUGH TO PRACTICALLY BE FRANCIS' MOTHER!
SINCE SHE IS SO WONDERFUL AFTER-ALL
EVER SINCE I WAS A CHILD, I'VE LOOKED UP TO MISS NATALIE,
OH, I AGREE WHOLE-HEARTEDLY
GETS IT
I WAS JUST SURPRISED AT HOW MISS NATALIE LOOKS MUCH YOUNGER THAN I REMEMBERED HER!

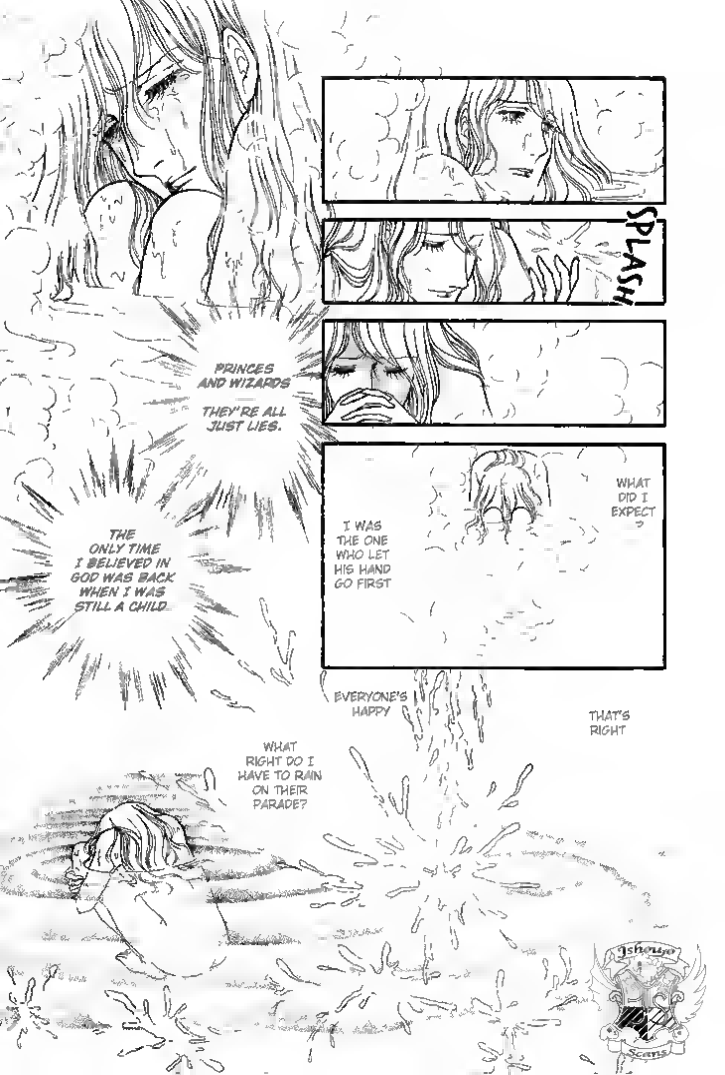

STOP IT, MILLY
IF SHE WAS MY MOTHER, THAT WOULD MEAN SHE GAVE BIRTH TO ME WHEN SHE WAS YOUR AGE
OH, BUT I COULD TOO. YOU KNOW I'M AN ADULT ALREADY
MY CLASSMATE THE OTHER DAY GAVE BIRTH TO A BABY
I'D BE LYING IF I SAID I WASN'T SURPRISED BUT—
I'M SORRY TO INTERRUPT
BUT EARL WOULD IT BE ALL RIGHT FOR ME TO BORROW YOUR BATH?
I'M STILL A BIT TIRED FROM THE TRIP
REJECTED
WHY OF COURSE YES, YOU MUST STILL BE QUITE TIRED FROM YOUR TRIP
I'M SURE MICHELE AND THE OTHERS WILL BE WILLING TO WAIT


OH, WHAT WONDERFUL NEWS!
TO THINK HE CAME FROM THE BLOODLINE OF AN EARL!
OH HE IS TRULY BLESSED!
YES, THAT'S WHAT I HEARD
EVEN WITHOUT KNOWING SUCH A CONNECTION EXISTED HE WAS ALWAYS SO FOND OF HIM!
THE MASTER HAS BEEN IN SUCH HIGH SPIRITS ALL DAY
WE WERE ALL SURPRISED THAT FRANCIS, WHOM HE WAS ALWAYS SO FOND OF, WOULD TURN OUT TO BE HIS GRANDSON!

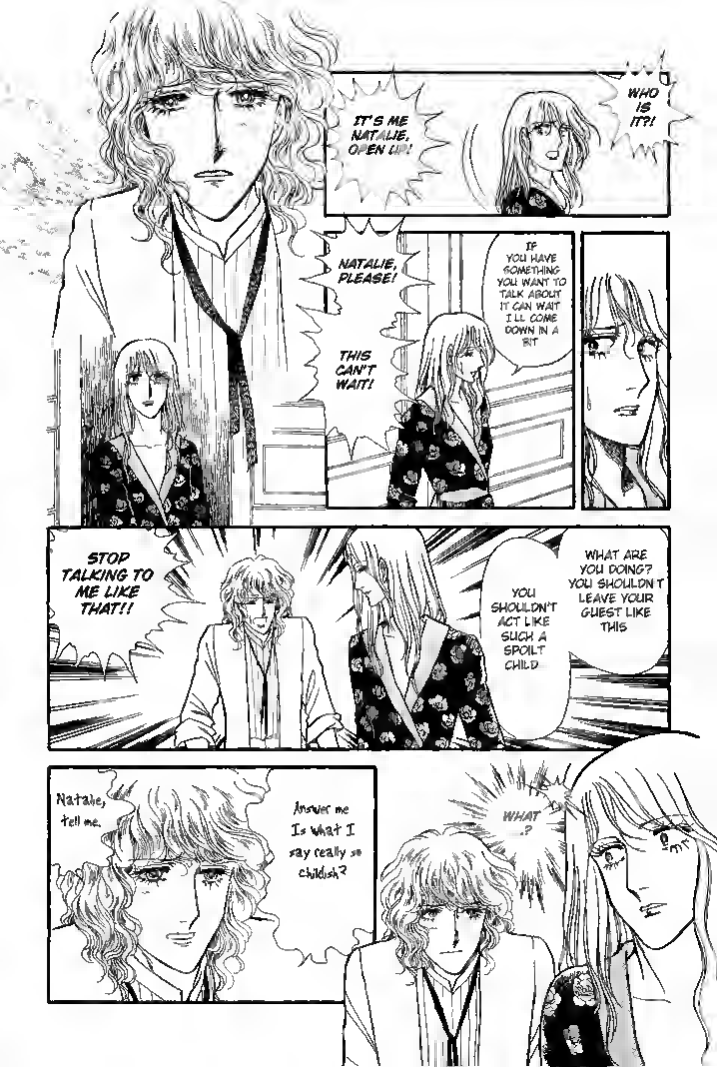
THANK YOU
I'VE PLACED YOUR LUGGAGE IN THE FAR CORNER.
PLEASE TAKE AS MUCH TIME AS YOU NEED


THAT THAT THOUGHT HADN'T EVEN CROSSED MY MIND
HE'D GROWN UP SO MUCH,
I REALLY AM OLD ENOUGH TO BE HIS MOTHER

WHAT A FOOL I AM
TO THINK I WOULD BECOME SO FLUSTERED JUST BECAUSE HE GRABBED MY ARM.
I WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT FRANCIS ANYMORE.
HE HAS THE EARL AND MILLFINE BY HIS SIDE...
HE HAS NO NEED FOR ME ANYMORE.
SIGH —
I'LL BE SO BUSY! I HAVE SO MANY THINGS I HAVE TO DO
OH AND AFTER THAT I SHOULD GO SHOPPING
HMM. WELL FIRST THINGS FIRST I BETTER GET THE HOUSE IN ORDER.
WHAT SHALL I DO FROM NOW ON?


SPLASH
PRINCES AND WIZARDS
THEY'RE ALL JUST LIES.
THE ONLY TIME I BELIEVED IN GOD WAS BACK WHEN I WAS STILL A CHILD.
I WAS THE ONE WHO LET HIS HAND GO FIRST
WHAT DID I EXPECT?
EVERYONE'S HAPPY
THAT'S RIGHT
WHAT RIGHT DO I HAVE TO RAIN ON THEIR PARADE?

EVERYONE I'VE EVER LOVED ALWAYS LEAVES ME IN THE END
DESPITE THAT I'VE STILL BEEN ABLE TO KEEP LIVING
I KNOW THAT HE ISN'T THE FRANCIS THAT I LOVED SO
I'M FOR WHAT?!
ARE YOU SATISFIED NOW?!
I HAVE NOTHING NOW!
BANG BANG
FLINCH
TICK-TOCK-TICK


WHO IS IT?!
IT'S ME NATALIE, OPEN UP!
IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT CAN WAIT I'LL COME DOWN IN A BIT
NATALIE, PLEASE!
THIS CAN'T WAIT!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING? YOU SHOULDN'T LEAVE YOUR GUEST LIKE THIS
YOU SHOULDN'T ACT LIKE SUCH A SPOILT CHILD
STOP TALKING TO ME LIKE THAT!!
WHAT ..?
Natalie, tell me.
Answer me Is what I say really so childish?

IN YOUR EYES, AM I STILL JUST SOME SPOILED LITTLE CHILD?!
WHAT AM I TO YOU?!
NATALIE TO YOU, AM I STILL THAT FOUR YEAR OLD CHILD YOU FIRST TOOK INTO YOUR HOME?!
Francis ..
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT AND YOU KNOW IT!
What's gotten into you...?
You're an 18 year old man Of course I don't see you as a four year old...
Am I such a child to you that you could never look at me in a romantic way?
From your point of view, am I nothing more than a trifling child?
What I want to know, is what you really think.

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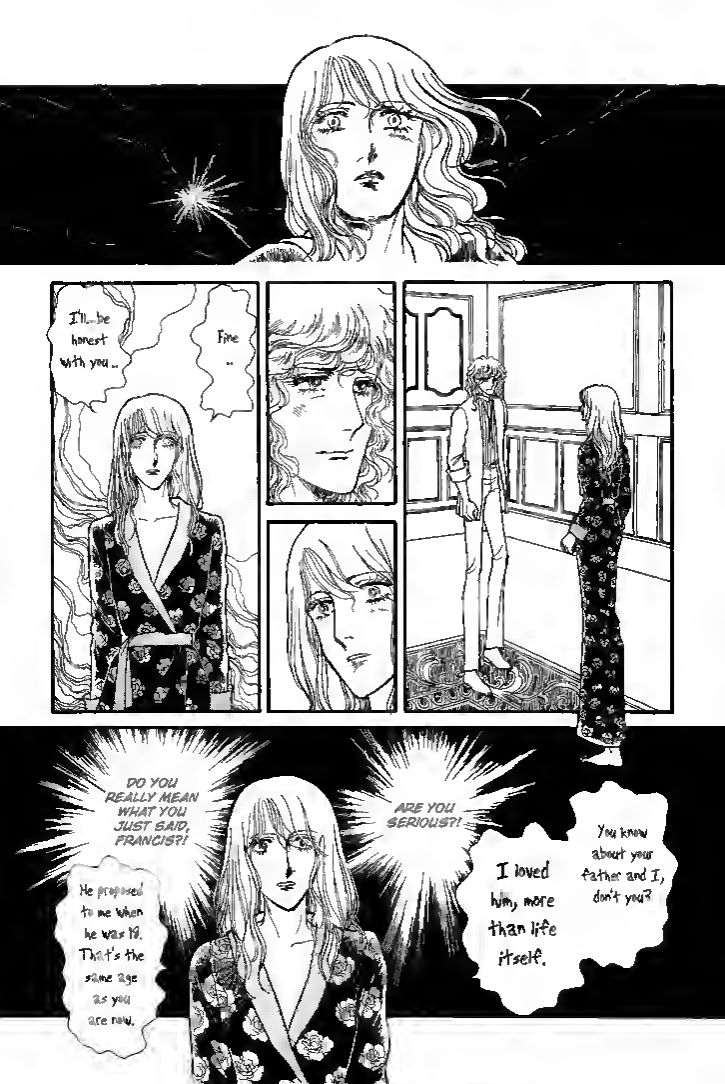

I'll...be honest with you..
Fine..
You know about your father and I, don't you?
I loved him, more than life itself.
ARE YOU SERIOUS?!
He proposed to me when he was 19. That's the same age as you are now.
DO YOU REALLY MEAN WHAT YOU JUST SAID, FRANCIS?!

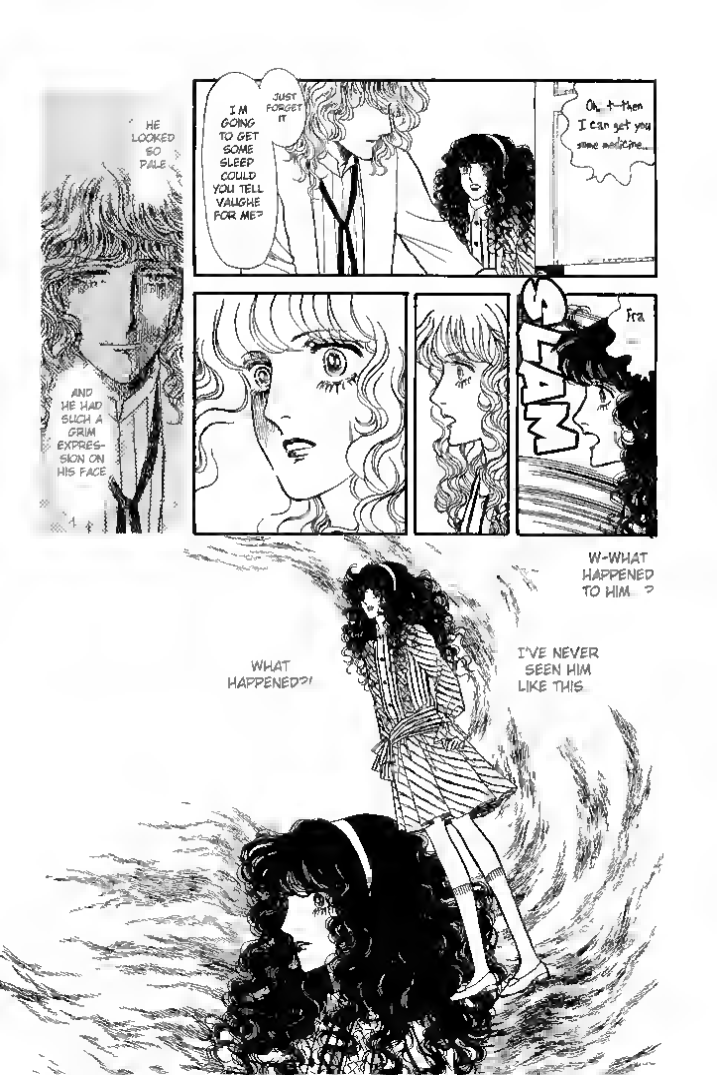
I CAN'T STAND IT. WHY DO YOU REMIND ME SO MUCH OF HIM?
YOU'RE SO LIKE HIM ...
IT'S NOT JUST YOUR FACE IT'S EVEN DOWN TO YOUR MANNERISMS AND EVEN THE WAY YOU LOOK AT ME ...
IT'S ALMOST AS IF HE'S STILL HERE.
THAT'S WHY MY FEELINGS GO IN A DISARRAY.
IN THE BEGINNING I WAS HAPPY THAT YOU RESEMBLED HIM SO MUCH.
BUT AS TIME WENT ON, IT JUST BECAME PAINFUL
I CAN'T LIVE WITH YOU ANYMORE
IT'LL STRAIN MY NERVES TOO MUCH
LIAR! THE TRUTH IS, YOU WANT TO STAY BY HIS SIDE ..

I LOVE YOU,
AND I CARE ABOUT YOU
but it causes you pain to see me?
Is it because you still love my father?
THAT'S RIGHT
STILL EVEN THEN, I WANT TO STAY BY YOUR SIDE!
How ... ironic ...
I want to do anything in my power that I can do for you—
—how could this be
but to think the only thing that I can do is to not be by your side...

I should
Scarlet
YOU'LL BE ABLE TO LIVE THE KIND OF LIFE THAT YOU WANT HERE
YOU'LL BE HAPPIER HERE
What I want..
is you
..
SLAM

THIS IS HOW IT SHOULD BE... THIS WILL BE WHAT'S BEST FOR HIM...
IF I DIDN'T TELL HIM THIS NOW... I WOULD HAVE ONLY ENDED UP HURTING HIM EVEN MORE
I WONDER WHERE FRANCIS WENT OFF TOO?
I'D LIKE TO GO AND LOOK FOR HIM. IF THAT'S ALL RIGHT WITH YOU.
FRANCIS, ARE YOU IN THERE?
IS SOMETHING WRONG?
KNOCK KNOCK
KNOCK KNOCK

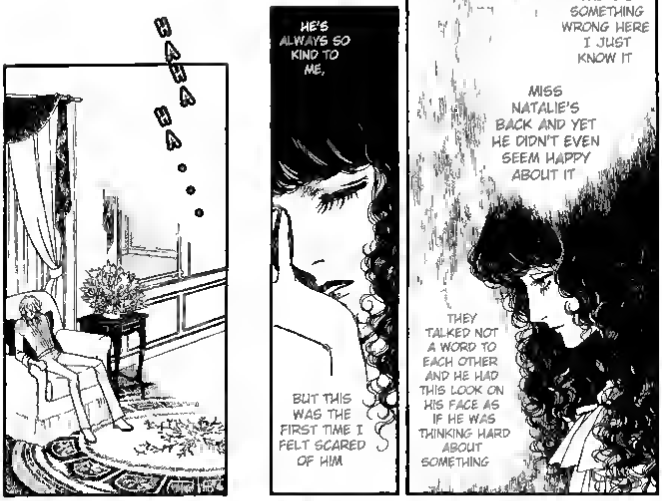
RUSH
KNOCK...
Francis...
FRANCIS, YOU'RE IN THERE AREN'T YOU?
I HEARD YOU JUST NOW OPEN UP!
CLICK
WHAT ?!
I HAVE A HEAD-ACHE


HE LOOKED SO PALE
AND HE HAD SUCH A GRIM EXPRESSION ON HIS FACE
I'M GOING TO GET SOME SLEEP COULD YOU TELL VAUGHE FOR ME?
JUST FORGET IT
Oh, then I can get you some medicine...
SLAM
Fra
W-WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM...?
I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM LIKE THIS
WHAT HAPPENED?!

WELL YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE EXPECTED ANY LESS!
PO—PI!!
PO
THAT'S RIGHT! HOW MANY YEARS DID YOU THINK YOU SPENT WITHOUT US HEARING A WORD FROM YOU?
HAHAA
KYA! STOP IT!
KIAAA!
I can't believe you two married without telling me!
HAHAA
Well I could ask you the very same question!
GREAT QUESTION! I'D BE HAPPY TO DIVULGE EVERY JUICY DETAIL!
MICHELE, HOW DID YOU MAKE HER FALL FOR YOU?
MICHELE!
W-We were planning on telling you when you got back...
It's embarrassing to tell you that kind of news over the phone, don't you think?

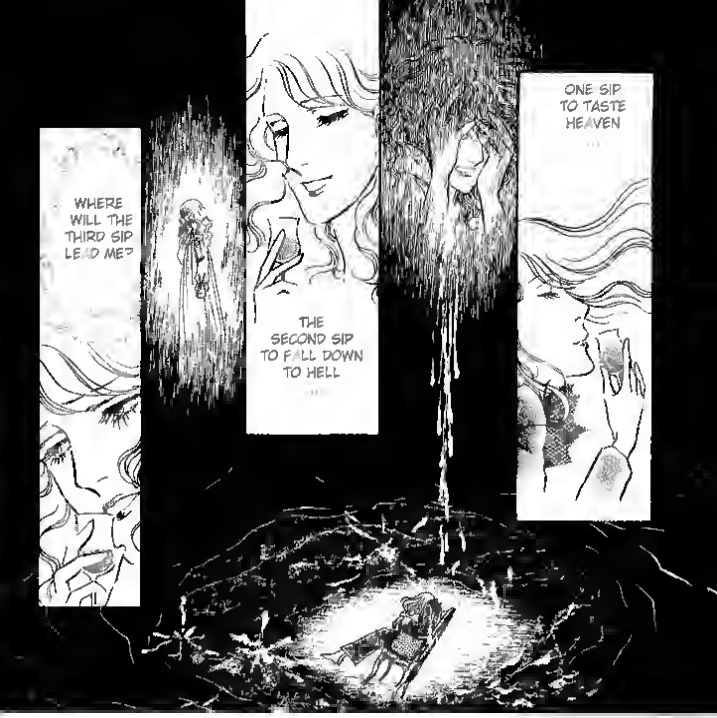
MICHELE, YOU BETTER NOT! YOU'LL ONLY END UP REGRETTING IT LATER
OH WHY NOT? I'D LOVE TO HEAR!
HEY!
WELL, LET ME TELL YOU!
STOP!
LOVELY
POP
MAY I PRESENT TO YOU, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN
A 1964 BOTTLE OF ROMANEE CONTI!
WHOA! THE WINE OF ALL WINES!
I WAS WONDERING WHEN YOU WERE GOING TO OPEN THAT BOTTLE!
WHAT GREAT TIMING!
FRANCIS IS MISSING OUT
BY SPENDING A DAY LIKE TODAY SLEEPING!
NO KIDDING! A VINTAGE WINE COMBINED WITH TRUFFLES AND FOIE GRAS? FORGET HEADACHES!
IF I WERE HIM I WOULD'VE FORCED MYSELF TO COME!

I'M SURE ONE SIP WILL BE ENOUGH FOR US TO GET A TASTE OF HEAVEN!
LET'S HAVE A TOAST. LET'S HOPE THAT VAUGHE'S CHERISHED WINE WILL BRING US ALL GOOD FORTUNE.

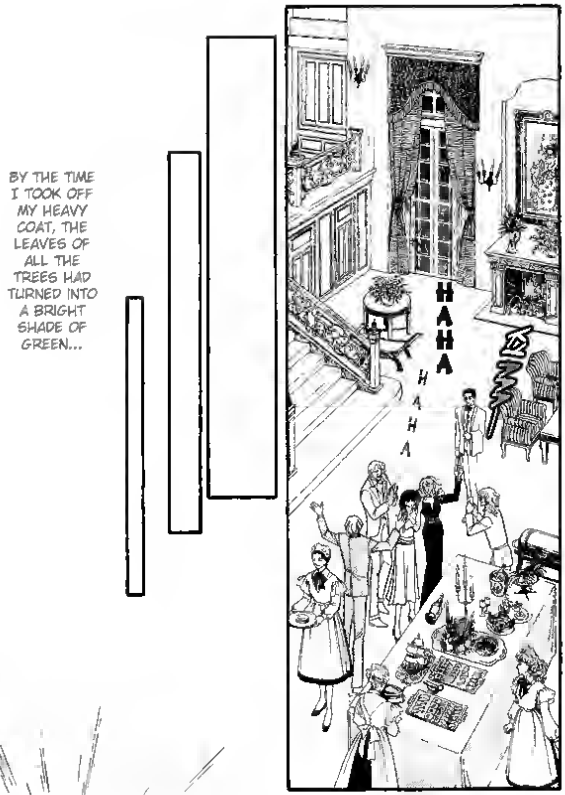

HE'S ALWAYS SO KIND TO ME,
BUT THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME I FELT SCARED OF HIM
THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG HERE I JUST KNOW IT
MISS NATALIE'S BACK AND YET HE DIDN'T EVEN SEEM HAPPY ABOUT IT
THEY TALKED NOT A WORD TO EACH OTHER AND HE HAD THIS LOOK ON HIS FACE AS IF HE WAS THINKING HARD ABOUT SOMETHING

"I CAN'T LIVE WITH YOU ANYMORE, IT'LL STRAIN MY NERVES TOO MUCH."
"I CAN'T STAND IT. WHY DO YOU REMIND ME SO MUCH OF HIM?"
"THAT'S WHY MY FEELINGS ARE IN A DISARRAY."
I DON'T EVEN REMEMBER HIS FACE CLEARLY.
THERE'S NO WAY I WOULD REMEMBER HIS MANNERISMS
DISAPPEAR ALREADY!!
ごぉー!

WILL IT BE RUBBED IN MY FACE EVERY TIME I LOOK IN THE MIRROR FROM NOW ON,
THAT THIS IS THE FACE OF THE MAN SHE LOVES?!
HAHA
BOTTOMS UP!
BOLP
ROLP


ONE SIP TO TASTE HEAVEN
THE SECOND SIP TO FALL DOWN TO HELL
WHERE WILL THE THIRD SIP LEAD ME?

WHERE WILL I GO?!
WON'T SOMEONE TELL ME?


BY THE TIME I TOOK OFF MY HEAVY COAT, THE LEAVES OF ALL THE TREES HAD TURNED INTO A BRIGHT SHADE OF GREEN...
HAHA
HAHA
HAHA

Yshouja
WHY DON'T YOU HANG ONTO THE SPARE KEY? IT'LL BE MORE CONVENIENT THAT WAY.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
I GOT THE MANAGER TO LET ME INTO YOUR APARTMENT. SORRY TO LET MYSELF IN LIKE THIS
click click
Hm?
HEY, I CAME TO VISIT.

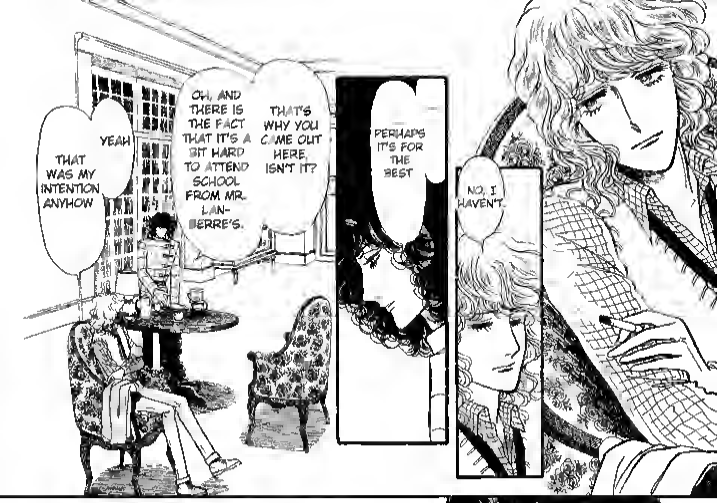
THEY ONLY EVER COME AFTER CLASSES ARE LONG OVER. THE ONLY THING THEY EVER MAKE SURE TO COME ON TIME FOR ARE DATES.
ERR
YOU SHOULD SEE SOME OF THE GUYS AT MY UNIVERSITY THOUGH — I'M PRACTICALLY STRAIT-LACED COMPARED TO THEM!
IT'S NOT AS IF I'M DOING ANYTHING THAT'LL BE A PROBLEM IF YOU WALKED IN ON ME UNANNOUNCED

I KNEW YOU'D GET IN
WELL, SEEING YOU AS YOU ARE I'M GUESSING YOU GOT INTO BACCALAUREATT?
WOULD YOU LIKE SOME COFFEE? OR A CAKE OR SOMETHING?
YEAH I THINK I'LL MANAGE TO GET IN SOME HOW
OH, NINA, PLEASE

SURE
WANT ONE?

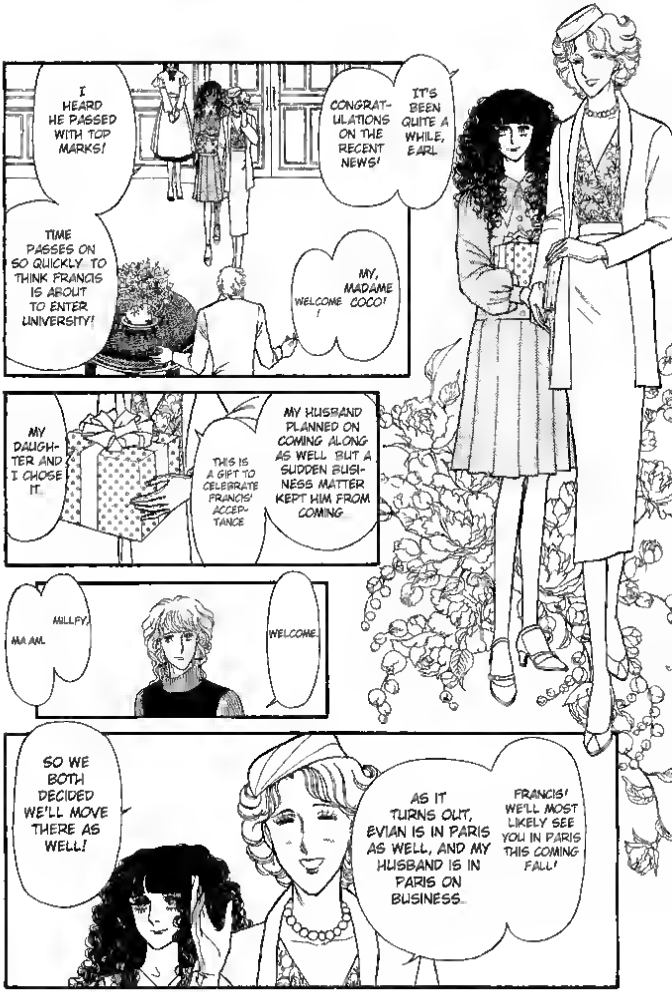
YOU JUST WANT TO CALL ME A SHOW OFF. AM I RIGHT?
GITANES AS ALWAYS. HUH?

POOURRR
YOU HAVEN'T SEEN HER SINCE THEN?
SO...

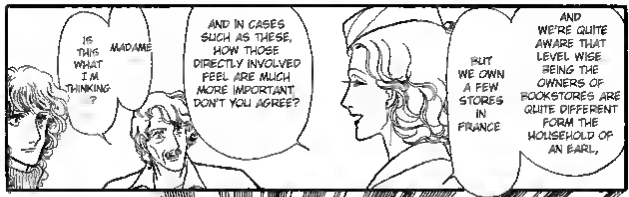

YEAH
THAT WAS MY INTENTION ANYHOW
OH, AND THERE IS THE FACT THAT IT'S A BIT HARD TO ATTEND SCHOOL FROM MR. LAN-BERRE'S.
THAT'S WHY YOU CAME OUT HERE, ISN'T IT?
PERHAPS IT'S FOR THE BEST
NO, I HAVEN'T.

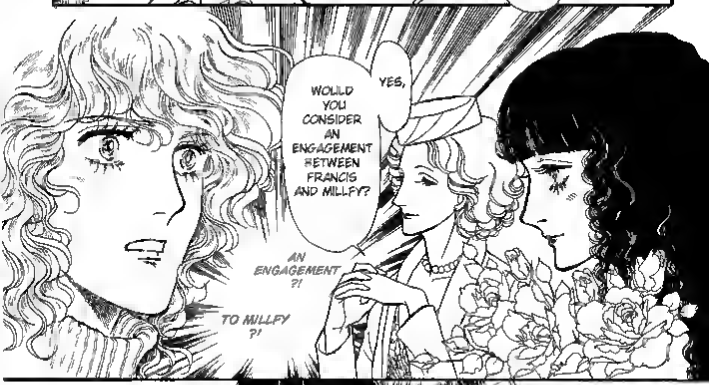
JUST SAY THE WORD, AND YOU'RE WELCOME HERE.
AND DON'T FORGET THAT WE LIVED FOR TWO YEARS IN THE SAME DORM ROOM! YOU KNOW THERE'S NO NEED FOR FORMALITIES BETWEEN US.
IT'S PRETTY CLOSE TO THE UNIVERSITY AND I'M SURE YOU'LL LIKE IT ONCE YOU START LIVING HERE.
THIS APARTMENT WAS ONE THAT MY FATHER HAD BEEN USING ON BUSINESS TRIPS. AS YOU CAN SEE, THERE ARE LOTS OF SPARE ROOMS.
WELL, WHY NOT MAKE IT PERMANENT?

I JUST CAN'T SEEM TO GET IN THE MOOD
YOU HAVEN'T BEEN PAINTING LATELY HAVE YOU?
ALL I DO IS SPEND MY DAYS WATCHING AS EVERYTHING PASSES BY ME...
ALL I DO IS SPEND MY DAYS BEING ALIVE NOTHING MORE
NO MATTER WHERE I LOOK NOTHING MOVES ME
THE CHANGING SEASONS AND THE SKY SEA, AND WIND THAT I USED TO LOVE SO MUCH BEFORE...
NONE OF THAT PIERCES MY SOUL ANYMORE


IT'S BEEN QUITE A WHILE, EARL
CONGRATULATIONS ON THE RECENT NEWS!
I HEARD HE PASSED WITH TOP MARKS!
TIME PASSES ON SO QUICKLY. TO THINK FRANCIS IS ABOUT TO ENTER UNIVERSITY!
MY, MADAME COCO! WELCOME!
MY HUSBAND PLANNED ON COMING ALONG AS WELL BUT A SUDDEN BUSINESS MATTER KEPT HIM FROM COMING
THIS IS A GIFT TO CELEBRATE FRANCIS' ACCEPTANCE
MY DAUGHTER AND I CHOSE IT
WELCOME.
MILLFY, MA AM.
FRANCIS! WE'LL MOST LIKELY SEE YOU IN PARIS THIS COMING FALL!
AS IT TURNS OUT, EVIAN IS IN PARIS AS WELL, AND MY HUSBAND IS IN PARIS ON BUSINESS.
SO WE BOTH DECIDED WE'LL MOVE THERE AS WELL!

MILLFY AND I ARE BOTH SO EXCITED TO LIVE IN PARIS!
WE'VE EVEN FINISHED HER TRANSFER TO RIZE ALREADY
OH AND THIS WILL BE PLANS OF THE FUTURE
BUT MY HUSBAND AND I WERE WONDERING SINCE FRANCIS IS ENTERING UNIVERSITY FAIRLY SHORTLY


AND WE'RE QUITE AWARE THAT LEVEL WISE BEING THE OWNERS OF BOOKSTORES ARE QUITE DIFFERENT FORM THE HOUSEHOLD OF AN EARL,
BUT WE OWN A FEW STORES IN FRANCE
AND IN CASES SUCH AS THESE, HOW THOSE DIRECTLY INVOLVED FEEL ARE MUCH MORE IMPORTANT, DON'T YOU AGREE?
MADAME
IS THIS WHAT I'M THINKING ?


YES,
WOULD YOU CONSIDER AN ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN FRANCIS AND MILLFY?
AN ENGAGEMENT ?!
TO MILLFY ?!

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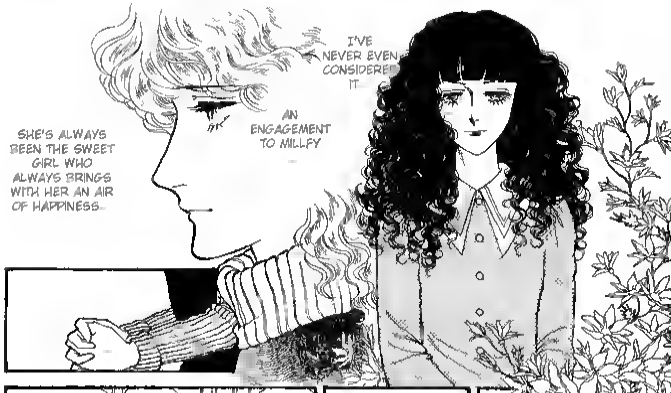
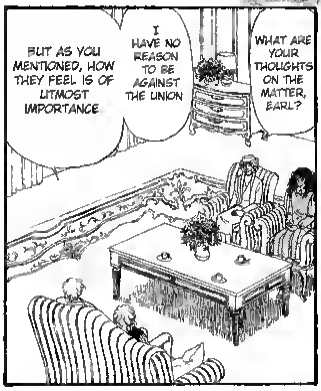

SHE'S ALWAYS BEEN THE SWEET GIRL WHO ALWAYS BRINGS WITH HER AN AIR OF HAPPINESS...
AN ENGAGEMENT TO MILLFY
I'VE NEVER EVEN CONSIDERED IT


WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE MATTER, EARL?
I HAVE NO REASON TO BE AGAINST THE UNION
BUT AS YOU MENTIONED, HOW THEY FEEL IS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE

I ALWAYS CONSIDERED HER THE SPOILED, YET ENDEARING PRINCESS
MILLFY ALWAYS DID GAZE UP AT ME AS IF SHE WAS TRYING TO READ INTO MY SOUL

IF IT WAS WITH HER THOUGH I'M SURE THAT EVERYONE WILL ACCEPT OUR UNION WITH OPEN ARMS

SHE SAID SHE WAS WORRIED FOR HIM TO GO OFF TO COLLEGE WITHOUT SOME KIND OF PROMISE MADE
BUT MILLFY WAS ALWAYS SET THAT ANY MARRIAGE BE BETWEEN HER AND FRANCIS!
TO BE HONEST,
WE'VE RECEIVED MANY REQUESTS FOR MILLFY'S HAND IN MARRIAGE

Well mother, there are so many girls in college!
Francis is so wonderful that I'm worried that someone else might take him!
—SO SHE SAYS
I FEEL VERY HONORED
BUT TO BE HONEST WITH YOU, I'M NOT READY TO START THINKING ABOUT SOMETHING LIKE THIS RIGHT NOW
B-But why, Francis, don't you like me?!
Saying that you don't want to think about it is like saying "no," isn't it?!
IT'S NOT THAT I HAVE ANYTHING AGAINST YOU
I CARE ABOUT YOU VERY MUCH...
BUT I JUST CAN'T THINK ABOUT SOMETHING LIKE THAT RIGHT NOW REGARDLESS OF WHOM IT'S WITH
I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO ME IN THE FUTURE,
SO I CAN'T THINK ABOUT SOMETHING LIKE THAT
REGARDLESS OF WHO THE OTHER PERSON IS, IT'S ALL A BIT TOO MUCH FOR ME RIGHT NOW...

WAIT, FRANCIS!
Why won't you consider getting engaged to me?!
WHEEZE
WHEEZE
Can't you give me a reason why?!
Please tell me— what am I supposed to do?!
What do I have to do to make you love me?!
I'm willing to do anything!
If there's something about me that you don't like, tell me and I'll fix it!
So please, Francis—
Milly ...
I've only ever loved you!
I've always had eyes only on you!
Why?! Why won't you understand?!

Just tell me ...
what do I have to do so that you'll love me...?
Don't you have even at least a glimmer of a romantic feeling towards me?!
Is there not one inkling of hope for me?!
OH HOW COULD THIS HAVE HAPPENED
SHE'S IN THE VERY SAME POSITION I WAS
SHE'S NO DIFFERENT FROM ME WHEN
IF I PUSH HER AWAY NOW ...
SHE'LL END UP HAVING TO GO THROUGH WHAT I DID
SHE'LL HAVE TO GO THROUGH THE SAME PAIN
I DON'T WANT TO HURT HER
I WANT TO RESPOND TO HER FEELINGS IF I COUL...

A-are you still in love with Miss Natalie?
IF ONLY I..
Is it because of her that you won't love me?!
That's why you won't marry me!
That's the reason why, isn't it?!

I WAITED YEARS FOR YOU TO GET OVER HER!
I'VE WAITED FOR YOU ALL THIS TIME!
OH HOW AWFUL!!
IF IT HAD BEEN ANYONE ELSE, PERHAPS I COULD'VE GIVEN UP AND MOVED ON, BUT NOT HER!
YOUR AGES ARE TOO FAR APART.
AND NOT ONLY THAT, BUT SHE WAS IN LOVE WITH YOUR FATHER!
THINGS WOULD NEVER WORK OUT BETWEEN YOU TWO!
IT WOULD BE STRANGE!
THERE'S NO WAY SHE WOULD LOOK GOOD WITH YOU!!
D-Don't Mutey—
STOP IT!
YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO SAY THAT!!

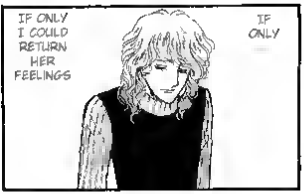
I-I'm sorry
SSSH

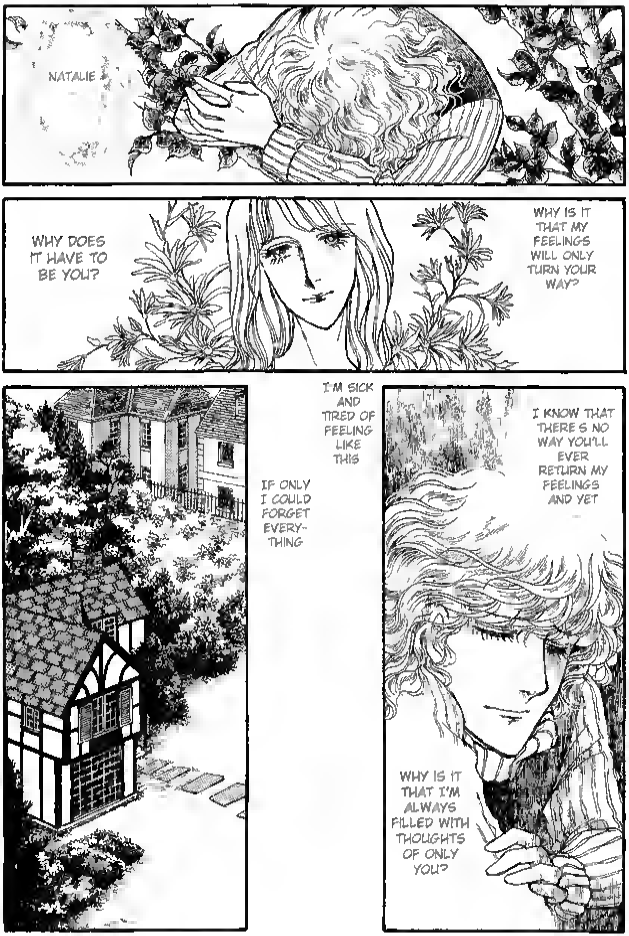
NO!
NO, FRANCIS!
I HATE YOU FRANCIS!
WHY NOT ME?
I LOVE YOU SO MUCH...AND YET YOU'RE TELLING ME YOU CARE FOR SOMEONE ELSE?!
WHY AM I NOT ENOUGH?!
THERE'S NO ONE ELSE IN THIS WORLD THAT LOVES YOU AS MUCH AS I DO!!

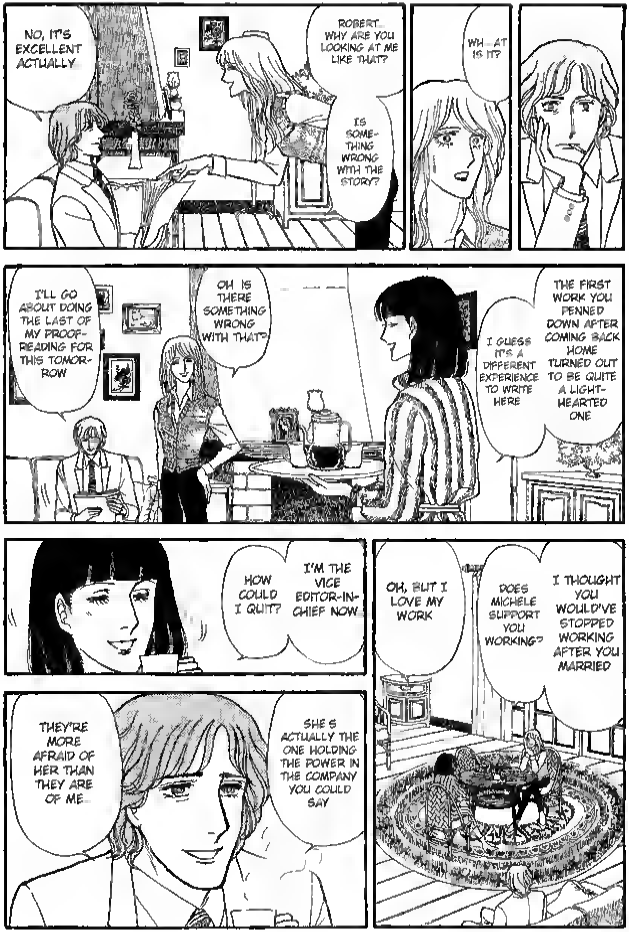
I WON'T GIVE UP
I'LL DO EVERYTHING IN MY POWER TO MAKE FRANCIS MINE!

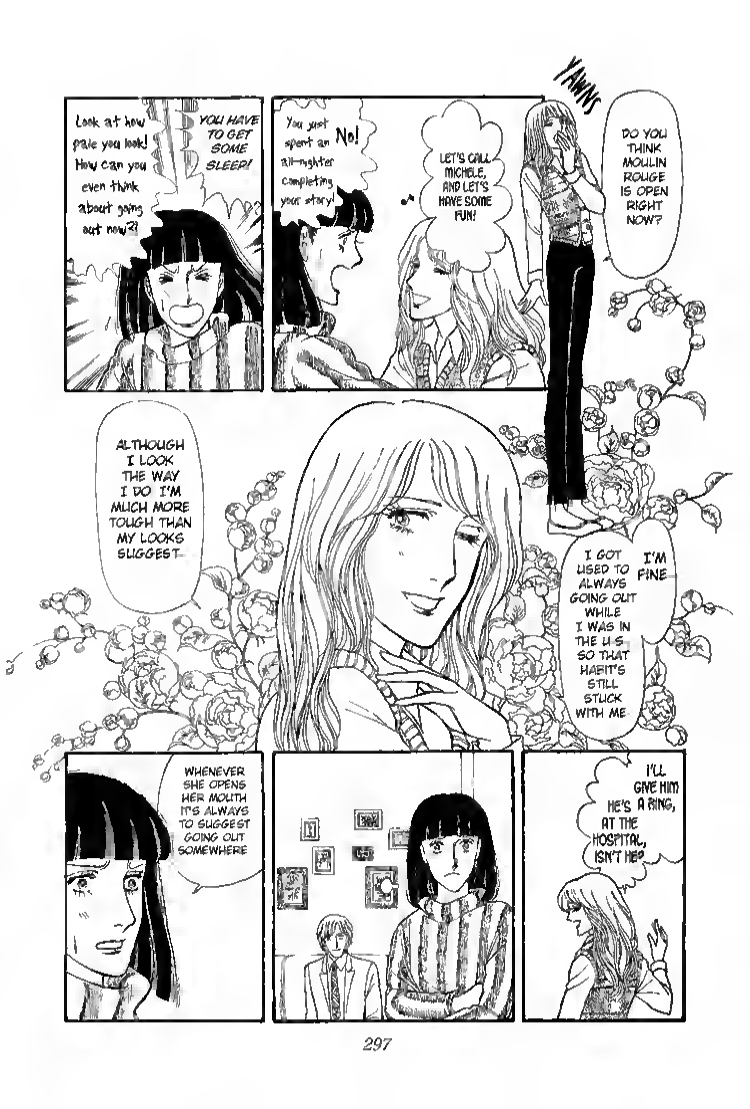
I DIDN'T WANT HER TO HAVE TO GO THROUGH THAT

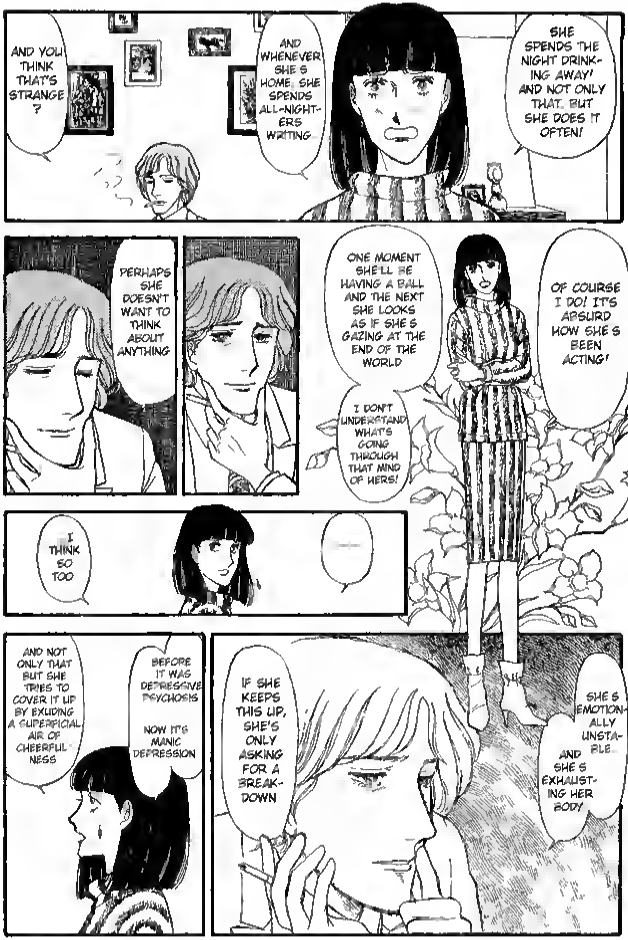
I DIDN'T WANT TO MAKE HER CRY THE WAY I DID


IF ONLY I COULD RETURN HER FEELINGS
IF ONLY

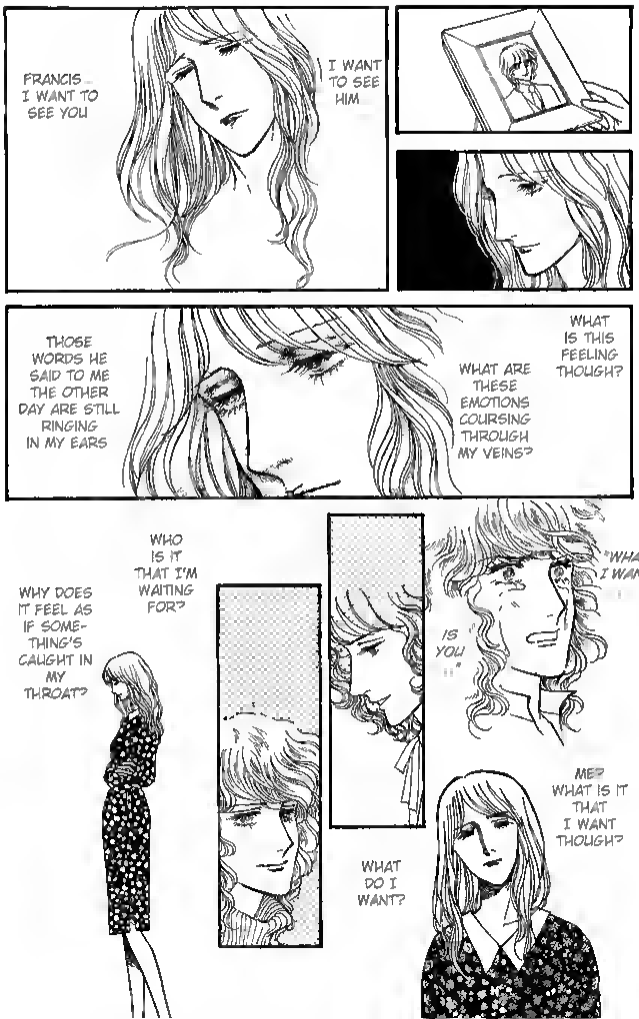

NATALIE
WHY DOES IT HAVE TO BE YOU?
WHY IS IT THAT MY FEELINGS WILL ONLY TURN YOUR WAY?
I'M SICK AND TIRED OF FEELING LIKE THIS
IF ONLY I COULD FORGET EVERY-THING
I KNOW THAT THERE'S NO WAY YOU'LL EVER RETURN MY FEELINGS AND YET
WHY IS IT THAT I'M ALWAYS FILLED WITH THOUGHTS OF ONLY YOU?


NO, IT'S EXCELLENT ACTUALLY
ROBERT... WHY ARE YOU LOOKING AT ME LIKE THAT?
IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH THE STORY?
WH...AT IS IT?
I'LL GO ABOUT DOING THE LAST OF MY PROOF-READING FOR THIS TOMORROW
OH. IS THERE SOMETHING WRONG WITH THAT?
I GUESS IT'S A DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE TO WRITE HERE
THE FIRST WORK YOU PENNED DOWN AFTER COMING BACK HOME TURNED OUT TO BE QUITE A LIGHT-HEARTED ONE
HOW COULD I QUIT?
I'M THE VICE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF NOW.
OH, BUT I LOVE MY WORK
DOES MICHELE SUPPORT YOU WORKING?
I THOUGHT YOU WOULD'VE STOPPED WORKING AFTER YOU MARRIED
THEY'RE MORE AFRAID OF HER THAN THEY ARE OF ME
SHE'S ACTUALLY THE ONE HOLDING THE POWER IN THE COMPANY YOU COULD SAY


Look at how pale you look! How can you even think about going out now?!
YOU HAVE TO GET SOME SLEEP!
You just spent an all-nighter completing your story!
No!
LET'S CALL MICHELE, AND LET'S HAVE SOME FUN!
YAWN
DO YOU THINK MOULIN ROUGE IS OPEN RIGHT NOW?
I'M FINE
I GOT USED TO ALWAYS GOING OUT WHILE I WAS IN THE U.S. SO THAT HABIT'S STILL STUCK WITH ME
ALTHOUGH I LOOK THE WAY I DO I'M MUCH MORE TOUGH THAN MY LOOKS SUGGEST
WHENEVER SHE OPENS HER MOUTH IT'S ALWAYS TO SUGGEST GOING OUT SOMEWHERE
I'LL GIVE HIM HE'S A RING, AT THE HOSPITAL, ISN'T HE?


AND YOU THINK THAT'S STRANGE?
AND WHENEVER SHE'S HOME, SHE SPENDS ALL-NIGHTERS WRITING
SHE SPENDS THE NIGHT DRINKING AWAY! AND NOT ONLY THAT, BUT SHE DOES IT OFTEN!
PERHAPS SHE DOESN'T WANT TO THINK ABOUT ANYTHING
ONE MOMENT SHE'LL BE HAVING A BALL AND THE NEXT SHE LOOKS AS IF SHE'S GAZING AT THE END OF THE WORLD
I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT'S GOING THROUGH THAT MIND OF HERS!
OF COURSE I DO! IT'S ABSURD HOW SHE'S BEEN ACTING!
I THINK SO TOO
AND NOT ONLY THAT BUT SHE TRIES TO COVER IT UP BY EXUDING A SUPERFICIAL AIR OF CHEERFULNESS
BEFORE IT WAS DEPRESSIVE PSYCHOSIS
NOW IT'S MANIC DEPRESSION
IF SHE KEEPS THIS UP, SHE'S ONLY ASKING FOR A BREAKDOWN
SHE'S EMOTIONALLY UNSTABLE... AND SHE'S EXHAUSTING HER BODY!

NATALIE HASN'T MENTIONED FRANCIS ONCE IN HER CONVERSATIONS
FRANCIS HASN'T ONCE COME TO SHOW HIS FACE HERE
GOD
EVEN WITHOUT HER TELLING ME, THERE'S ENOUGH EVIDENCE FOR US TO SENSE WHAT'S HAPPENED
IF ONLY SHE'D BE HAPPY
I'D BE WILLING TO CLOSE MY EYES TO ANYTHING
PERHAPS HE'S COME TO SHARE HIS FATHER'S STATE OF MIND
IT DOESN'T MATTER WHO.
AS LONG IT'S SOMEONE WHO CAN SAVE HER


FRANCIS... I WANT TO SEE YOU
I WANT TO SEE HIM
THOSE WORDS HE SAID TO ME THE OTHER DAY ARE STILL RINGING IN MY EARS
WHAT ARE THESE EMOTIONS COURSING THROUGH MY VEINS?
WHAT IS THIS FEELING THOUGH?
WHY DOES IT FEEL AS IF SOMETHING'S CAUGHT IN MY THROAT?
WHO IS IT THAT I'M WAITING FOR?
"WHAT I WANT IS YOU"
ME?
WHAT IS IT THAT I WANT THOUGH?
WHAT DO I WANT?

NOISE
NOISE
YO, FELHAN
HAVING TWO PRETTY BOYS SIDE-BY-SIDE IS LITERALLY ENOUGH TO MAKE ME SWOON!
MY, YOU'VE BROUGHT QUITE THE LOOKER TONIGHT.
HEY FELHAN!
WHY DON'T YOU COME OVER HERE?
I'LL INTRODUCE YOU GUYS TO HIM
HE'S FRANCIS, HE'LL BE JOINING US IN THE FALL
HE'S STILL A NAIVE GOODY-TWO-SHOES, SO DON'T TRY TO DYE HIM IN YOUR COLORS
YOU BETTER WATCH OUT FOR WELLA,
SHE'LL GO AFTER ANYONE AS LONG AS THEY'RE HANDSOME
Hahaha
HOW RUDE!
HUH, YOU'RE PROBABLY THE WORST CULPRIT OF US ALL FELHAN
YEAH, AND ANYWAY THIS ISN'T THE MOST IDEAL PLACE TO BRING IF YOU'RE NOT LOOKING FOR BAD INFLUENCES

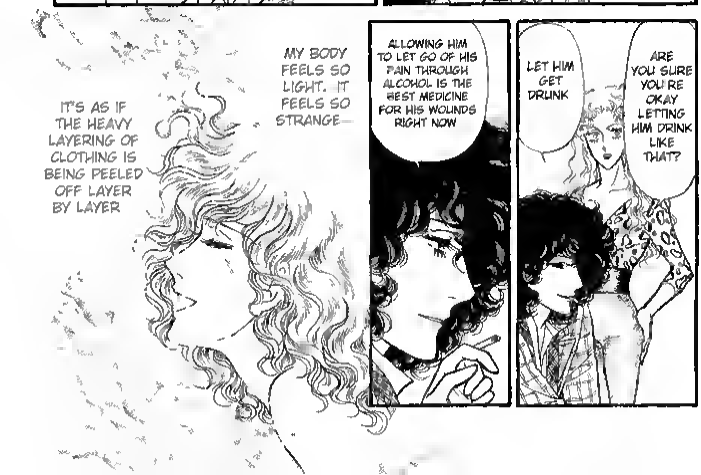
I KNEW I SHOULDN'T HAVE BROUGHT YOU HERE
OH, IT MAKES ME WANT TO TEACH YOU SOMETHING NAUGHTY
I DON'T GO FOR INSINCERE POOLS EVEN IF THEY ARE HANDSOME
BUT LET ME TAKE A LOOK AT YOU—OH, YOU PRACTICALLY HAVE THE FACE OF AN ANGEL!
Hmm...
I'M MICHAEL BY THE WAY
THE ANGEL OF ANGELS AS THEY SAY!
SO WHAT? IS THIS GOING TO TURN INTO THE TALE OF A HARLOT WHO SEDUCES THE BEAUTIFUL ANGEL?
I'D SAY YOU'RE CLOSER TO LUCIFER IF ANYTHING
SINCE YOU'RE HERE WHY DON'T YOU HAVE A SEAT? I'LL GET YOU A DRINK
I'M USUALLY PRETTY GOOD AT SENSING STUFF LIKE THIS!
IT'S SO STRANGE THOUGH!
THAT I DON'T SWING THAT WAY?
HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU UNTIL YOU GET
WELL, IF THAT'S YOUR WISH, I'D TURN INTO LUCIFER ANY DAY!
FELHAN-CHAN, WHY DON'T WE HAVE SOME FUN TONIGHT?

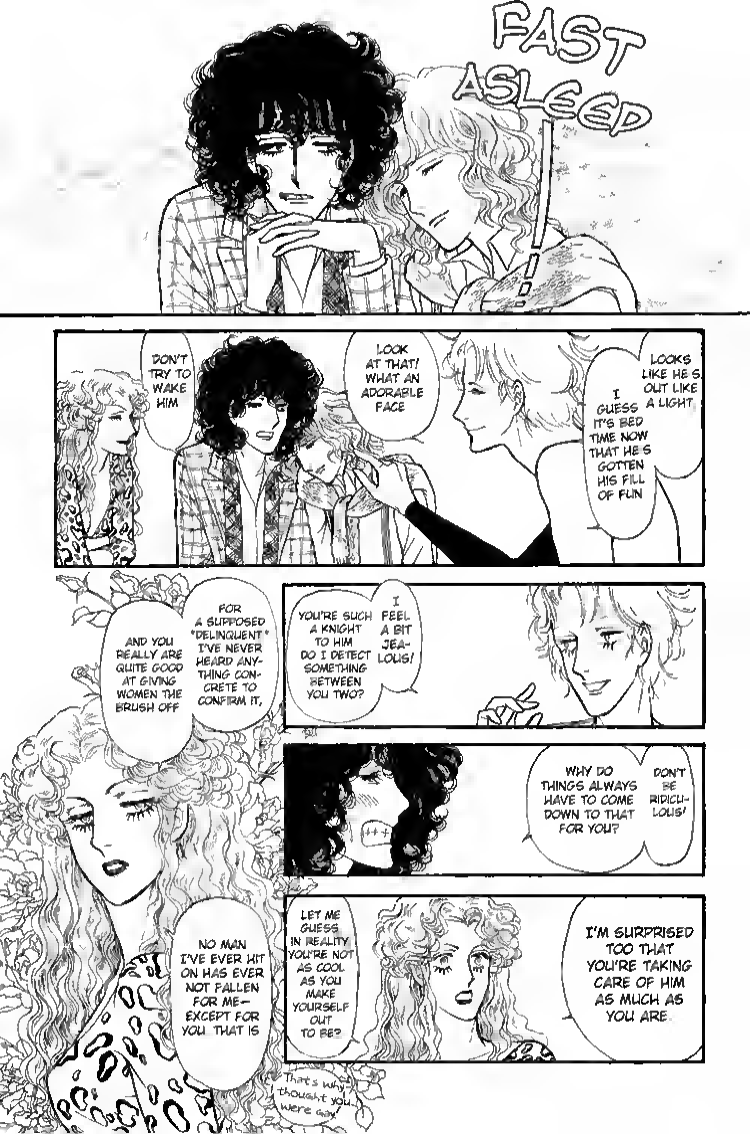
HEY THERE'S NO WAY HE'LL BE ABLE TO GET IN BETWEEN US WHAT WITH US HAVING LIVED TOGETHER FOR TWO YEARS
AND NOT TO MENTION FROM SEPTEMBER ON, WE'RE GOING TO GET BACK TOGETHER
Oh stop playing around. You mean we're staying in a dorm!
MICHAEL'S GAGA FOR FELHAN
I CAN'T BELIEVE HE'D GO FOR HIM WITH ME IN THE ROOM! HOW RUDE!
YOU BETTER WATCH OUT TOO FRANCIS
OR ELSE HE'S GONNA MAKE IT SO YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO MARRY
I BET HE'S GONNA TRY SOMETHING WITH YA
WOW!
Gulps
THAT'S AMAZING!
ANOTHER BEER FOR THIS TABLE!
AN AMERICAN CAFE
I KNEW IT! PINK LACE PANTIES I WIN!
KYA
Idiot!
DANGIT!
GRR
JUST YOU WATCH! I'M GOING TO GRADUATE THIS YEAR EVEN IF IT KILLS ME!
Hahaha
THAT'S WHAT YOU SAID LAST YEAR!

AMIDST THESE NAMELESS STRANGERS I CAN BECOME ANYONE THAT I WANT
THE SOUND OF GLASSES CLINKING TOGETHER COMBINED WITH THE LIGHT LAUGHTER
THE CIGARETTE SMOKE IS SO THICK THAT IT CHOKES MY LUNGS

I CAN DRINK TO MY HEART'S CONTENT

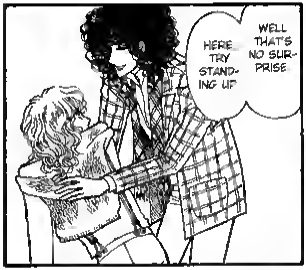
MY FRIEND WHO'S LAUGHING BESIDE ME, WATCHES OVER ME TO MAKE THAT POSSIBLE


IT'S AS IF THE HEAVY LAYERING OF CLOTHING IS BEING PEELED OFF LAYER BY LAYER
MY BODY FEELS SO LIGHT. IT FEELS SO STRANGE
ALLOWING HIM TO LET GO OF HIS PAIN THROUGH ALCOHOL IS THE BEST MEDICINE FOR HIS WOUNDS RIGHT NOW
LET HIM GET DRUNK
ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE OKAY LETTING HIM DRINK LIKE THAT?

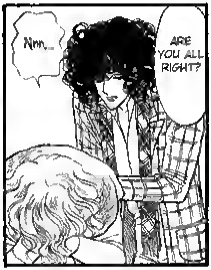

FAST ASLEEP!
LOOKS LIKE HE'S OUT LIKE A LIGHT
I GUESS IT'S BED TIME NOW THAT HE'S GOTTEN HIS FILL OF FUN
LOOK AT THAT! WHAT AN ADORABLE FACE
DON'T TRY TO WAKE HIM
I FEEL A BIT JEALOUS!
YOU'RE SUCH A KNIGHT TO HIM DO I DETECT SOMETHING BETWEEN YOU TWO?
DON'T BE RIDICULOUS!
WHY DO THINGS ALWAYS HAVE TO COME DOWN TO THAT FOR YOU?
I'M SURPRISED TOO THAT YOU'RE TAKING CARE OF HIM AS MUCH AS YOU ARE
LET ME GUESS IN REALITY YOU'RE NOT AS COOL AS YOU MAKE YOURSELF OUT TO BE?
NO MAN I'VE EVER HIT ON HAS EVER NOT FALLEN FOR ME— EXCEPT FOR YOU. THAT IS
FOR A SUPPOSED "DELINQUENT" I'VE NEVER HEARD ANYTHING CONCRETE TO CONFIRM IT,
AND YOU REALLY ARE QUITE GOOD AT GIVING WOMEN THE BRUSH OFF
That's why I thought you were gay

I DO SO HAVE A FONDNESS FOR INNOCENT PRETTY BOYS.
HEY FELHAN, WHAT DO YOU SAY YOU LEAVE THIS ANGEL TO ME?
HE IS QUITE TEMPTING
GLARE
NOISE
NOISE
BUT ASK THAT AGAIN, AND I'LL REARRANGE THAT FACE OF YOURS THAT YOU'RE SO PROUD OF.
MICHAEL, YOU ALWAYS BRUSH OFF YOUR WORDS AS A JOKE.
FLINCH

I'M NOT GOING TO LET ANYTHING HAPPEN TO HIM THAT HE DOESN'T WISH FOR.
JUST REMEMBER THAT.
Ah...
o-kay
...
Talk about impressive!
That was pretty scary!
Whoa...
S-so he's...
are you serious..


WELL THAT'S NO SURPRISE
HERE, TRY STANDING UP

I-I just feel a bit queasy..


Nnn...
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

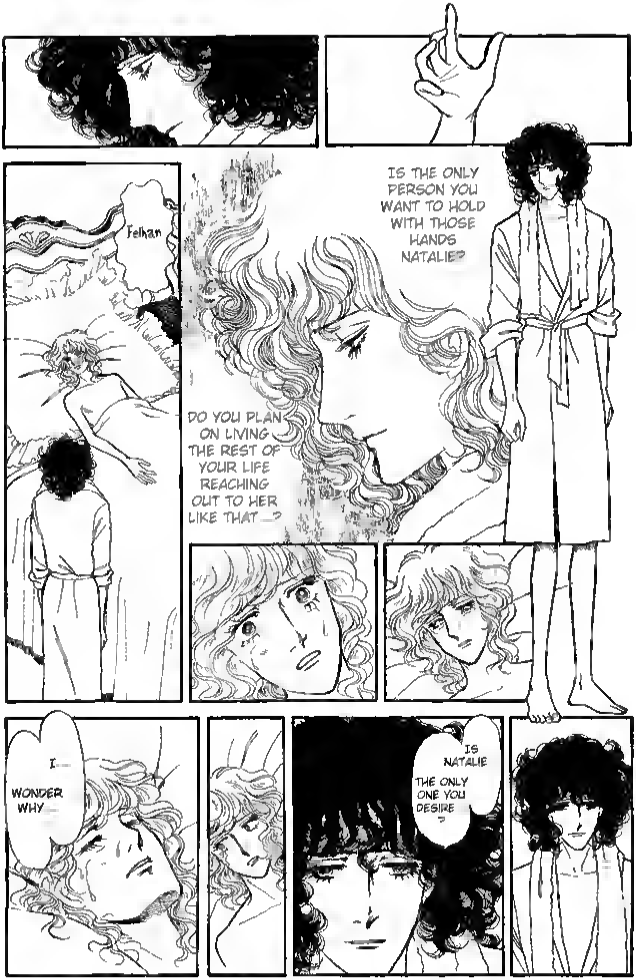
THAT'S WHAT YOU GET FOR HAVING GROWN UP BEING CODDLED BY ADULTS.
YOU DESERVE TO LET LOOSE SOMETIMES TOO, YOU KNOW.

WHAT, YOU'RE ALREADY STARTING TO REGRET IT NOW AFTER WE ONLY JUST LEFT?
THAT'S WHY YOU'RE ALWAYS THE GOODY-TWO-SHOES
I'm sorry, Fukan...
I'm... sorry...
ANTIC

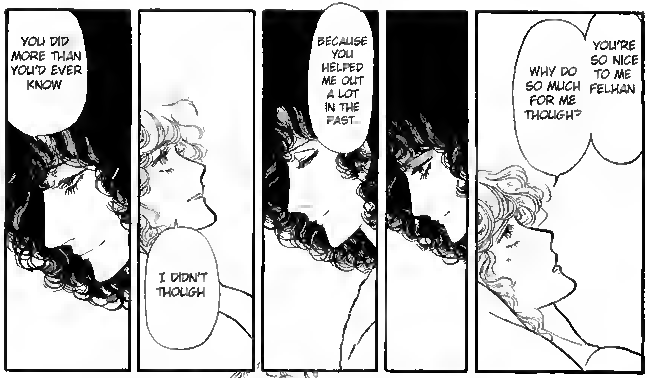
I can't believe I acted like I did...
I feel so ashamed.

SO YOU CAN LET YOUR GUARD DOWN AROUND ME.
NO MATTER WHAT YOU DO I WON'T TRY TO CONTROL YOUR ACTIONS,
IT'S GOOD THAT YOU THINK ABOUT OTHERS AND ALL BUT IF IT JUST ALWAYS CONSISTENTLY GETS YOU DOWN WHAT'S THE POINT IN IT YOU KNOW?
IT'S NOT BAD TO HAVE SOMEONE LIKE THAT DON'T YOU THINK?
I'LL LISTEN TO YOU LET OFF STEAM ANY DAY OF THE WEEK
YEAH

FRANCIS TAKE OFF YOUR CLOTHES BEFORE YOU GO TO BED
IF YOU SLEEP IN THOSE VOMIT-STAINED CLOTHES YOU'RE GOING TO END UP FEELING SICK AGAIN WHEN YOU WAKE UP —
HUH — WHAT AN INNOCENT FACE
C'MON, TAKE THOSE CLOTHES OFF BEFORE YOU SLEEP
I CALLED YOUR PLACE FOR YOU
Nn...
I'M TURNING OFF THE LIGHTS
GOOD NIGHT
Uuu
Nn...
No...
No...
Na... tave...


Felhan
IS THE ONLY PERSON YOU WANT TO HOLD WITH THOSE HANDS NATALIE?
DO YOU PLAN ON LIVING THE REST OF YOUR LIFE REACHING OUT TO HER LIKE THAT —?
I— WONDER WHY—
IS NATALIE THE ONLY ONE YOU DESIRE —?

I DON'T EVEN UNDERSTAND IT MYSELF
WHY WON'T ANYONE ELSE DO?
I WANT TO FORGET
SO WHY IS IT THAT I CAN'T?
I'M SICK OF THIS
AND YET...
I'D LIKE TO TRY MEETING HER ONE DAY.
TO SEE WHAT KIND OF WOMAN SHE IS THAT HAS CHARMED YOU SO.
I HAVEN'T GROWN A BIT, HUH?
YOU REMIND ME OF THE TIME WE WENT TO THE LIS.
YOU LOOK EXACTLY AS YOU DID THEN.
YOU SHOULD GET SOME SLEEP. IF YOU FEEL UNEASY ABOUT BEING BY YOURSELF, I'LL STAY RIGHT HERE.
THIS IS HOW A MOTHER MUST FEEL WHEN HER CHILD'S COME DOWN WITH A SICKNESS.


YOU DID MORE THAN YOU'D EVER KNOW
I DIDN'T THOUGH
BECAUSE YOU HELPED ME OUT A LOT IN THE PAST.
WHY DO SO MUCH FOR ME THOUGH?
YOU'RE SO NICE TO ME FELIXIAN

BACK WHEN THE ONLY WAY I KNEW TO ESCAPE MY ANGER WAS TO GET INTO TROUBLE,
IF YOU HADN'T BEEN THERE FOR ME, I DON'T KNOW HOW THINGS WOULD'VE TURNED OUT.
YOU TOOK ME ON HEAD-ON AND YOU OPENED THE DOORS FOR ME

FOR YOU FRANCIS I'D BE WILLING TO DO ANYTHING
NN..
OH RIGHT. LAST NIGHT... I ENDED UP SLEEPING HERE

IS IT WISE FOR HIM TO DO SO THOUGH? HE CAN'T HOLD ME RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN TO HIM~
HE'S SLEEPING WITH SUCH A RELAXED EXPRESSION ON HIS FACE...
I GIVE UP